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Poland Under Jaruzelski

Part II

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Poland: Self-Occupation and Resistance—Part II

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Preface

WHEN General Jaruzelski introduced a " state of war " in Poland, many Western commentators saw it as the end of Polish resistance embodied in the Solidarity movement, and often drew parallels with Hungary after 1956 and Czechoslovakia after 1968.

Today, the period of General Jaruzelski's rule has already lasted longer than the era of Solidarity; it is clear that, as with other historical parallels, the comparison with Hungary and Czechoslovakia is not quite appropriate. Polish resistance continues under " self-occupation " and the General's hopes for " normalization " have not been fulfilled. The social, economic and political crisis in Poland has not been solved.

The forms of struggle vary, and the resistance itself finds many expressions, from the most innocuous symbolic manifestations of opposition to the regime, through to sullen refusal to grant it any form of legitimacy, to underground activities and public demonstrations.

The full extent of this resistance has not been realized abroad. Just as the emergence of the Solidarity movement (documented in two special issues of Survey, *Nos. 109 and 110) took the West by surprise, so now Western observers underestimate the continuing resistance of the Polish people. We decided, therefore, once again to devote two special issues of* Survey *to the present unequal struggle, in order to make it easier for the Western reader to understand and see Polish developments in a wider framework and with greater political and historical depth.*

Under martial law, Solidarity was first suspended and then formally dissolved, many thousands of its members were arrested, interned, imprisoned and harassed by the authorities in one form or another. Workers and intellectuals, artists and actors, students and academics, have all seen their hopes for a better and freer future dashed. After the initial shock, however, the repressions met with a surprisingly steadfast refusal to accept " national salvation " from the barrel of a gun.

This unyielding attitude requires an unusual degree of courage, and the texts published below illustrate this amply. The contrast between Jaruzelski's people and Walesa's people is evident in the moral and intellectual calibre of the representatives of the two sides.

Underground Solidarity is only one element in the Polish refusal to acquiesce to a return to old totalitarian ways, the re-imposition of the lie and the whip, a relapse to the continuing rape of society by the state. But it is, of course, an important element. Its activities range from—surprisingly numerous—underground publications to other forms of organized resistance. These include a network of unofficial cells in factories, offices and universities, contacts necessary to coordinate public actions and demonstrations, and general efforts to maintain the morale of society and its " Front of Refusal." As before, underground Solidarity excludes violent action, and its strategy is basically rooted in passive resistance.

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Coordinating committees of Solidarity in important towns and regions are subordinate to the national Temporary Coordinating Commission (TKK) of Solidarity which provides the necessary links between local activists, through leaflets, radio broadcasts and illegal publications. It has maintained itself and strengthened cooperation throughout the 18 months of the Jaruzelski regime, in spite of police persecution and the arrest of some of its leaders (such as Wladyslaw Frasyniuk, Zbigniew Romaszewski, Piotr Bednarz and Jozef Pinior). The organized and non-organized resistance of Polish society depends on popular attitudes, on morale and solidarity (with a small " s "). These are in turn crucially affected by the position of the Catholic Church which tries to avoid involvement in political activities, even though it is clear that its position cannot but affect powerfully the political situation in a country where everything, inevitably, has a political aspect. The debates about the best way to deal with the complexities of the imposed situation illustrate the dilemmas of underground Solidarity, of the Church and, ultimately, of Polish society itself. At the 12th Party Plenum, Jaruzelski and Czyrek tried hard to present a positive picture of the regime's achievements and indicated that they would " firmly combat actions of an opportunistic-revisionist and dogmatic-sectarian character." However, this kind of " centrism " is irrelevant to the real, and not just Party, issues and cannot tackle the deeper problems of Polish society. The current rulers are confronting a situation in which economic reform cannot be successful without the cooperation of society, but compromise is not possible on the basis of a restitution of the customary communist political controls. The result is a stalemate in which the Poles, for geo-political reasons, cannot achieve even a modest " solution," while the Jaruzelski regime cannot achieve communist " normalization " because society will not accept this as normal. As Zbigniew Bujak said in an interview published in Tygodnik Mazowsze *(26 May 1983), the Polish resistance must think in terms of " years, not weeks or months." No short-term actions or manoeuvres can alter these basic elements inherent in the situation; Polish developments will inevitably be affected by them for a long time to come. The history of Poland demonstrates that these elements will not be eradicated as long as the Poles are who they are, and as long as the Soviet Union is what it is.*

L.L.

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The State of War through the Eyes of Children

Outside the Window—War, and We're in Bed

" The war found us in our beds. A neighbour from upstairs woke us up: ' It's war! Jaruzelski's gone mad. Look out of the window.' We jumped up on to the window-sill. Only one of our windows looks out on to the street. We looked over to the crossroads and saw tanks and cars there. There were patrols everywhere. It wasn't even clear whether they were military or police patrols.

" Daddy swore and said: ' They've gone mad, if it really is war.' The neighbour assured him: ' I tell you it is war. The Moscow whore has done what she was paid to do.'

" We got dressed quickly and went out into the street. On the walls were big announcements about the introduction of martial law and capital punishment. The Solidarity posters had been torn down or covered over with other posters saying: ' Ice Spectacular.'

" Daddy said to me: ' Be quiet and don't talk. And don't get involved in any discussions at school.'

" Christmas was very sad. Mummy was crying. To cheer her up we got hold of two huge posters about the state of war. We put them up in the kitchen. But mummy started to cry even more. So I didn't know what else to do to cheer her up. Daddy said: ' Leave her alone and put the posters away. They may come here.'

" Just after Christmas I went back to school. At break the boys in my class beat me up. ' That's for Solidarity, you scum!' they shouted. In our class they are mostly policemen's children. That's why they beat me up. The other children were scared to come to my defence. Even the teacher was afraid.

" The second lesson was games and sports. Everyone played together—as if nothing had happened."

Pawel, age 13 (parent—higher technical education)

Our Neighbour Cried

" I did not know that they had taken my father away. I was asleep with my brother and I did not hear a thing. Nothing at all. But my brother must have heard something because he was crying and mummy was trying to calm him down. He is very small. He can barely talk.

" Next day our neighbour burst into tears when she saw me. She said that my dad was in prison for Solidarity.

" At first I was ashamed that my father was in prison because no one in our family has ever been in prison, and I remember that when the father of one of my classmates was put in prison for stealing, the other boys laughed at him and called him the 'son of a thief.'

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" At school the teacher gave me some sausage and some money. She said that the money was for us and the sausage was for my father. I told her then that my father was not in prison but was travelling. And I started to cry. The teacher told me that I should not be ashamed because it is not my father who is guilty, but the men who put him in prison.

" My little brother went to see my father with my mummy, and afterwards he was calling for daddy all the time. I feel sorry for daddy. I would like him to take me out on the bicycle as he always did, but I don't cry. Not at all. Because father said to mummy—she told me—that I am now the oldest man in the family."

Marek, age 10 (father—worker, interned)

I'll Steal a Gun

" I want daddy to come back very much. Everyone wants him to—mummy, granny and Mrs Alice. But they keep him there. The naughty men. And they beat him there. Mummy says that they don't, but I know that they do. When I grow up I will steal a gun and I will shoot the man who took my father away. Even if my father comes back I'll still do it, because mummy is crying.

" They put daddy in prison because he went on strike so that there would be no war. They put father in prison, but the war still goes on."

Janek, age 5 (father—technician, arrested)

If they Take my Mummy Away

" I was sure that they would take mummy away because she was wearing the badge. She still wears it, but now she pins it on to the T-shirt under her blouse. Still, they haven't taken her away. Perhaps they made a mistake and forgot, but they may still remember. I would have to go to my father then, but he is a drunk and has a new mummy. I'm afraid of this and I asked mummy to throw the badge away, although it is very nice. She says that she cannot do this and that I should wear my own little religious necklace. For mummy, her badge is like my necklace. I can read the word on it by myself. It says ' Solidarity.'

" Our people wanted it to be better for everyone and the communists beat them and put them in prison for it. Because they want Poland to be in the Soviet Union and not in the West. If they take mummy, I think they will take me too because I am all alone with mummy. But if they take mummy and not me, then I don't know. I will cry for my mummy. But perhaps they won't find us because there are many houses around where we live."

Renata, age 7 (mother—shop-assistant)

Benches Instead of ZOMO

" We play at internment camps. We all sit on the bench and Jurek goes round and watches us to see that we don't escape. When he turns his

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head away, we shout ' *Wrona skona* ' (the crow will die) and he beats us. We don't beat him because he is ZOMO and can shoot us. Jurek doesn't want to be in ZOMO, but we give him sweets so that he will. He fits because he is fat. Mummy says that it is a stupid game because somebody may hear us and denounce us to the real ZOMO. But even though she says this, she herself switches off the lights on the [monthly] anniversary of the [proclamation of the state of] war. She doesn't say anything about all of this to father because father is in the Party.

" There are lots of people in our flat. Mummy doesn't work and father must be in the Party because otherwise they will take his money away and we will all die: me, my two older sisters and my little brother too. Besides, my mummy has a tiny baby in her tummy.

" I sleep with my father and brother in one room and my sisters and the tiny baby in mummy's tummy sleep in another room. When mummy switches off the lights on the war's birthday, father is asleep and I only pretend to be asleep, but I understand everything. Yesterday we played a game of Uprising. The Germans were ZOMO and we killed them. But this time there were only benches instead of ZOMO because Jurek did not want to be ZOMO even for sweets, although two of the sweets had chocolate in them."

Pawel, age 5 (father—plumber)

Our Teacher

" Our teacher said that now, in the war, the children of the militiamen and the soldiers are the most miserable because their fathers are on active service for Poland. And I told her that my uncle's children are the most miserable because my uncle is in prison in Ilawa. My teacher began to shout and told me to shut up or else I would also go to prison. And she added that Solidarity people must be exterminated like ticks.

" Our teacher is a Party secretary. Nobody loves her or even likes her. In our class it happens that everyone's parents are in Solidarity. It was horrible to hear our teacher's threats, but then she just stopped shouting and burst into tears."

Janek, age 12

Shut up and be Quiet

" Daddy said: ' Shut up and be quiet.' I won't tell anyone anything now. Not even what we have for supper. Daddy says everything must be a secret now. Daddy even sleeps with his eyes open, I swear."

Adam, age 10 (father—policeman)

Mummy Forbade Me

" Mummy forbade me to talk about it, but I'm going to tell. On 12 December I went to the hairdresser because it was my birthday, and in the morning on the next day I realized that something had happened because

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my television programme wasn't on. Mummy said that martial law had been introduced but did not explain what that means.

" Mummy forbade me to talk about it, but I know that what happened is because the government is bad and all that. That is why there is a curfew for grown-ups and even for children. Now it is the army that rules, and only then the Party. My parents are in the Party, but they say that the Party and communism are to blame for all this. I don't understand why they belong to this Party. It's difficult for me to talk about it because I don't really understand it, and besides mummy forbade me.

" They rule badly because they don't think at all about what they are doing. Anyway, it's Russia's fault because although they export some things to us, they take more away. At school I don't talk about these things with my classmates because mummy forbade me, and they don't talk about them either because their mummies also forbade them.

" For what Jaruzelski has done, I would make him retire and put him on a pension."

Olek, age 8 (parents in executive positions)

In our School

" After 13 December 1981, all kinds of sharp and funny graffiti about Jaruzelski and his mob and ZOMO appeared on our school benches. For every comment scrawled in this way, our teachers threatened us with punishments, lowering our marks and calling our parents. But no one could care less about their threats and everyone scrawled away like mad. The teachers ordered us to bring in paint-stripper and paint to remove and paint over the graffiti. We weren't forbidden to wear religious necklaces, so all the boys took advantage of the opportunity and everyone wore them. But resistors* were immediately confiscated if they were pinned on outside, so they were worn carefully concealed.

" During our lessons we had to be guarded in what we said so as not to let anything slip out. History was the lesson in which we could exchange views freely about the ' state of war.' Our history teacher's views are similar to our own.

" The boys have started mass-producing fire-crackers and other types of flares and explosives. We used them at the 3 May demonstrations. Afterwards, teams of security police came to our school to identify the boys who took part in the demonstrations. Some of my friends cut their hair short so that there would be less chance of them being recognized.

" And then came 13 May [the anniversary of the *coup*]. My class decided that we'd all stand for one minute at 12 o'clock. The school-bell would be our signal. We hadn't collaborated with any of the other classes, but it turned out that many of the other forms did the same. Our teachers were so taken by surprise that the minute had passed before they

* Electronic resistors were worn as a symbolic gesture of resistance.

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could do anything. Only the gym teacher caned the boys in his lesson who stopped doing their exercises.

" This teacher will be punished in due course."

Adam, age 14

Daddy was not Afraid

" It was daddy's birthday and the guests arrived. They were very noisy and I couldn't sleep. I heard somebody come in the night and say that Mokotowska Street was surrounded. That's how it began.

" In the morning mummy did not know whether to send me to school or not, and daddy was quite upset at first. But soon he came to the conclusion that we must win. He sat in the armchair and said: ' Well, we'll spend Christmas in a free Poland.' Now we can see that he was wrong.

" On Tuesday I went to school, but there were no lessons for three weeks so I didn't go to any, and I met only my school-teacher. I was very sad when I saw her and cuddled up in her arms. The next day I went to see my friend Leon and we played together and forgot about the war.

" For six days it was quiet, but then on Sunday they came for daddy for the first time. He wasn't at home, the house-lady opened the door and when she saw the security men she got very frightened because she thought that they were going to take her. But they didn't, they only ordered her to go into the other room while they waited. Finally, daddy came back and they questioned him for a long time. But daddy wasn't afraid and he even made paper aeroplanes while they were there.

" Then some visitors came and they were very upset. When I saw all this I got very frightened. This was what it was like the first time. When they came for the second time and took daddy away, we weren't so nervous. Daddy came home late at night, but I don't know what happened because I was asleep.

" Nothing happened for five days, but then they ordered daddy to come again and made threats. The most interesting time was 3 May. I got up in the morning and there was nothing happening. There was no Polish lesson at school, only the 3 May celebrations. Then when I came home, mummy said that there would be a street demonstration at 6 p.m. and that she didn't know what would happen. And then suddenly at 5.30 I heard the piercing noise of the police sirens. I could see everything from the window. There was a terrible racket going on at Swietokrzyska Street: people were shouting, whistling and running away. Boys from the nearby school were marching with the [national] flag. Policemen were throwing flares and firing tear gas at them, and even beating some people with their truncheons. They were also firing their guns, but they were probably only blanks. I was sitting at home then, looking out of the window. Mummy went out to make a phone call because my little sister was at nursery-school, but the phones had been cut off. I was alone in the house and I thought that if Leon came over we would feel better if we were together. Then mummy went out to fetch my little sister from

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nursery-school, but just then grandpa and Ela came in. When they saw that mummy was going out they told her she was mad because there were armoured cars outside. I was afraid, I was terribly afraid that they would take her to prison, but she came back.

" In the evening we waited to listen to the ' Solidarity ' radio programme and at the same time watched the people marching down Marchlewski Street. Everyone began to switch their lights on and off and I did the same. It was great—all the houses looked like lighthouses.

" In my school the children are very cross with Jaruzelski. When a soldier comes to the school everyone shakes their fist at him. Maybe not quite, but that's how it should be. In one school, during break, all the children stand with their hands up against the wall as if they were going to be executed. That's how it should be at all schools."

Romek, age 9

You Can Tell them by their Smell

" In the morning mummy looked into my eyes and said: ' It's bad, very bad.' I was surprised that she said this because of course I have known for a long time that it's bad, very bad. I said so, and mummy sighed and said that now it is even worse. She then looked at me as if she wanted to say something, but she didn't. I wasn't puzzled then that daddy wasn't at home, because he was always disappearing off, but in the end I asked when daddy would be coming home. Mummy didn't say anything, and only on the next day did I learn that they came for daddy the other night, but that daddy had escaped from them.

" After three days I already knew the score, and then I got into a terrible fright. I was so scared, for about five days. I was scared for my daddy, that they would put him in prison. I met my father secretly in town and advised him to surrender to the police, and then they would only intern him, but if they caught him they would put him in prison.

" All the time I was afraid of the curfew, I thought that somebody would throw us out of our flat at night and take me and my mummy away. I thought that if, for instance, they came and didn't put me in a children's home, but took only mummy away, I would run to Grazyna and she would take me to granny. And then the *ubeks* [security police] came. They went round the flat and one of them asked where daddy was. The other *ubek* shouted at him and told him not to molest the child. These *ubeks* had a strange smell and for a while I thought that you could tell an *ubek* by his smell. But now I am not so sure."

Zbyszek, age 7 (intelligentsia family)

My Father Has a Pistol

" My father has got a pistol and a shotgun. And he's not scared of anything. But mummy is. Before, she wasn't scared, she just swore at Solidarity. And daddy would even faint. Not from fear, but from anger.

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" Long before the state of war, the workers wanted to throw daddy out from being the director. They didn't like it that he was once a policeman. They also said that he was a thief. And at night in the bedroom, daddy shouted: ' In my own factory! My own people! They used to jump at my every word! And now?!' And then he fainted. Mummy poured water over him. Daddy was elected to the Voevodship Committee. That was still before the war. Once I saw that daddy wanted to frighten mummy. He got up one night and painted the letter ' L ' on the front-door. He also put an ' L ' on the neighbour's door—he's also a director. In the morning, mummy started screaming that we would all have our throats slit. I wanted to tell mummy that it was a joke, but daddy slapped me on the face. He said: ' They want war—they'll have it.' From then on, he began to carry a pistol on him. The war wasn't a surprise to him when it came.

" At the beginning, mummy was pleased, although she had some worries. When daddy wasn't at home, she would take me with her to spend the night at the military unit. So that we wouldn't get our throats slit. I'm scared to tell her that it was only a joke, all this ' L ' business. Daddy would find out from her and would beat me again."

Adam, age 9 (father—secondary education, mother—university education)

My Sister on my Shoulders

" My sister doesn't even know that there is a war on. When they came for daddy, she didn't even wake up. Everyone woke up—first mummy, then daddy, and even granny, who is rather deaf and sleeps like a log. They were turning my sister in her cot, looking for something, and she was still fast asleep, as if nothing had happened.

" My sister is big for her age, she looks stronger than me. She isn't as nervous as me and eats anything she is given. Mummy says that now her only problem is me because my sister will eat anything, even a shoebrush, but not me, I wouldn't eat one. Mummy does not know how she is going to feed me.

" When the war broke out, daddy and mummy were fired from their jobs. They even took daddy away, but then they released him. But they didn't give him a job. If it wasn't for the priest, we would have died of hunger. The priest gave us flour, rice and milk. Not long ago, he gave us some margarine. And even a bottle of oil. He has been helping us since March.

" Mummy worked in TV and daddy worked on a newspaper. Now mummy earns money by typing. Daddy is going to work on a building-site or something. I don't know exactly, but he is going to make bricks from gravel. My sister doesn't know anything about all this, and she'll soon be one and a half. She is stupid, she just makes mud-pies, while I have all sorts of worries on my shoulders, including my sister."

Marek

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It is Bad in the Camps

" In the history lesson, the teacher asked what the children had seen on 3 May. Each child had to say what he had seen. I saw a demonstration with white and red national flags. They were marching and shouting, ' Down with the junta!,' ' Free Walesa, lock up Jaruzelski!'

" When I went on describing the demonstration, the teacher stopped me and asked what I thought of it. When I said that the people have had enough of war and camps, the teacher would not let me say anymore and told us that conditions in the camps and prisons are good.

" I told her that she was wrong, that it is bad in the camps, and the cells in the prisons are small and smelly, with the toilet inside. ' How do you know that?' asked the teacher, ' People told me,' I said, and the teacher threw me out of the class. As if this would convince me that I was wrong.

" Now this teacher hates me, but the other teachers like me."

Jaroslaw, age 10 (parents—university education)

Mother of God on the Flag

" I am amazed when everybody tells me that I am only small and must learn. I know very well that I must grow up to do what my sister and mummy do. I'm not stupid. When I paint slogans on the wall, I do it in such a way that I won't be caught. But if they arrest my sister, I will take round the [underground] publications, as she does, so help me God, whatever happens.

" I gave my sister 1,000 zlotys from my savings for the underground to buy printers ink for their publications. She took 500 zlotys, but anyway I took the remaining 500 and put them into the box at St. Martin's Church because they help the interned. A lady with Mother of God on a flag asked me if I hadn't taken the money from my parents and I said ' no ' and she believed me. Now that my birthday is coming up, I asked all my family to give me money [not presents], so I will have something again. Only I asked my sister for a Mother of God on a flag or for a picture of Walesa."

Dorota, age 11 (mother—hospital nurse)

***Wezwanie*, 2–3, May–July 1982**

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The Canary*

Marek Nowakowski

Kubus was very old.

" We're in the same way, Kubus and I," grandma would say. She treated the canary as a partner with equal rights.

She always knew whether he was in a good humour or not. She could tell from the look in his eyes. She did all she could to please him. It was to him that she addressed her long monologues, with their unexpected punchlines. The way his beak moved, the way his filmy eyes opened and shut conveyed to her his approval or dissent.

" You're right, Kubus, of course," she would say, " but what else could I do?"

Her stories were concerned, more often than not, with the remote past. They went back to her youth, to her schooldays in St Petersburg, her adventures during the First World War and the Russian revolution.

Listening to the canary's morning song was grandma's greatest pleasure. He would hop to the top of the cage and strike up there. Grandma sat facing him and listened with religious concentration. If someone suddenly came into the room, grandma's finger went to her lips, commanding silence. In her mind, Kubus was an outstanding performer, a Caruso among canaries. The purity of his voice, his high register and the richness of his tunes were often the subject of our telephone conversations.

No wonder that grandma got upset when, one morning, he failed to open up. Difficult at the best of times, Kubus now just ruffled his feathers and pecked fiercely at the finger grandma proffered.

" There, there, Kubus," said grandma, trying to soothe him. She hoped against hope that his silence might be only a passing whim. But next morning there was still no sound. Kubus had ceased to sing.

" It's like a house in mourning," announced grandma on the telephone and those words described exactly the state she was in. She never took her eyes off the canary, who dozed with his head tucked under his wing. She wondered anxiously whether he was ill and we discussed arrangements for taking him to an animal clinic. The proclamation of martial law postponed all that.

We just forgot about it. We visited grandma occasionally to take her some vital provisions and to exchange anxious and chaotic thoughts on the sad events in our country. Grandma was even more put out than we were. For one thing, when telephones were cut off, she lost her only contact with other people. Because of her rheumatism she hardly ever left the flat. She spent her days gazing in helpless reproach at two objects

* From *The Canary & Other Tales of Martial Law* by Marek Nowakowski, transl. by Krystyna Bronkowska, to be published by Harvill Press (London) in 1983.

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in her room: the silent telephone and the cage with its silent canary. All this, and of course her experiences in the past, made grandma pessimistic in the extreme.

" The Soviet Union is like snakes," she would pronounce, as if in a clairvoyant trance. " It promises and promises and then it strikes and strangles you."

We hadn't visited grandma for some days when they finally reconnected the telephones in our town. Grandma rang us first. The call was preceded by a monotonously repetitive taped announcement: " this conversation is being monitored, this conversation is being monitored." It put grandma off for a second or so, but she waited for the refrain to cease, got her connexion, and shouted joyfully into the receiver.

" Would you believe it, the canary is singing again!"

There was a click on the line and a voice, live this time, addressed grandma sternly:

" No code please, or we shall disconnect you at once."

Grandma was most indignant. " The man's off his head. I can't put it more plainly. The canary has started singing again."

There was another click and she really was disconnected. She tried to dial again, jiggled the receiver in its cradle. Dead silence. Cut off from the world. Still Kubus was singing. That meant a great deal. We took grandma along to the local council office. We had a letter from the Residents Committee to say that the canary really existed. We joined a long queue, and grandma stood patiently leaning on two sticks.

" I went all through the revolution in Russia," she said, " and then the Red Terror, but there was never anything like this . . ."

We tried to quieten her down. She was indignant.

" What do you mean keep quiet?"

We waited for it.

" No code, indeed!" Grandma raised her voice. " The man is off his head." People in the queue turned to look at us.

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Arts Under Arms

From Solidarity to Arts Control*

Halina Filipowicz

IN the final scene of Andrzej Wajda's award-winning film *Man of Iron*, we see jubilant workers leaving the Gdansk shipyards after a prolonged sit-in which has led to the emergence of the independent labour federation Solidarity. It is 31 August 1980. To end the strikes and sit-ins which have spread throughout the country, government negotiators have just signed in Gdansk an agreement with Solidarity's Inter-Factory Strike Committee. Wajda's camera now focuses on one of his major characters, a reporter who has been sent to Gdansk to do a story discrediting an important Solidarity activist. As the reporter walks out of the shipyard with the workers, a local Party official drives up in his car and cheers him up: " What's signed under pressure, doesn't count."

Often overlooked by enthusiastic Polish audiences who rejoiced at the film's uplifting projection for a hopeful future, the final exchange in *Man of Iron* now seems to have been prophetic: the government will seek to manoeuvre itself out of all agreements with the workers. With martial law clamped on Poland by the military government and thousands of Solidarity activists whisked off to detention camps, the film's political insight became obvious. Sixteen months after the birth of Solidarity, Poland was transformed into a tightly closed military camp. Virtually overnight, on 13 December 1981, the newly-won liberties were wiped out. Together with other politically charged films, plays and literary works, *Man of Iron* was relegated to the censor's vault.

Wajda's powerfully affecting film, perhaps the major artistic work to come out of Solidarity's Poland, captures the essential role of the arts in Poland. Traditionally, the arts are not merely a witness to their time, a reflection of their epoch, but also the epoch's conscience, its judge and its prophet. Poland's post-war political leaders have been well aware of the power of the arts to challenge the prevailing ideology and to counteract the lies and falsifications of the regime's propaganda. Thus they have responded with repressions and censorship restrictions.

AMONG Solidarity's original demands, written into the August 1980 Agreement, were relaxation of censorship and access for the new, independent labour union to the government-controlled media. The demands reflected Solidarity's belief that a renewal of Poland should involve not only political and economic reforms, but also cultural ones.

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Solidarity was never granted access to network radio and television, which have been the main propaganda outlets for the Communist Party and the government. During the August 1980 strikes, for example, the news media chided and cajoled the workers, euphemistically referring to " work stoppages " and viciously attacking " enemies of the people " and " anti-socialist elements." Small wonder that most reporters (so-called " *dziennikarze rezimowi*," or journalists who have sold out to the regime) were barred by striking workers from the Gdansk shipyards.

Once the agreements with Solidarity were signed, the authorities continued to tinker with the content of the news media, sometimes allowing greater freedom and sometimes re-imposing controls, in order to increase the utility of the media to the regime. Throughout 1981, in blatant anti-Solidarity propaganda, television programmes never failed to blame the labour federation for the deepening economic and political crisis in the country. The propaganda of success, typical of Poland during the 1970s, was now replaced by the propaganda of doom. The media sought to create panic responses by constantly reminding the viewers of Poland's geo-political situation, declining production, rising national debt and shortages, of everything from electricity to soap-powder.

During the 16 months when the government tolerated the existence of Solidarity, information was manipulated to discredit the new union. Barred from state-run radio and television, Solidarity turned the streets into living newspapers, broadcasting its own programmes from radio stations mounted on vans. Painted on walls and pavements, Solidarity signs warned: " official media = conspiracy against truth."

DESPITE the anti-Solidarity propaganda and the constant threat of a showdown, artistic and intellectual life in Solidarity's Poland was—after years of anger or apathy—unusually rich, if tense and precarious. The situation of many Polish artists before the rise of Solidarity is perhaps best summed up by one of the characters in Janusz Glowacki's one-act play entitled *Flashback*: " If you can't write the whole truth, it's better to write half-truths than nothing at all." Those who insisted on the whole truth rather than allusions and allegories, were joining a steadily growing network of underground journals and publishing houses, constantly risking police harassment, fines, and imprisonment. Other artists, who also cared about truth and integrity but were dependent on state-owned equipment and facilities, waited for years to have their work produced through official channels, often not without last-minute concessions to the censor. The most telling example is Wajda's film *Man of Marble*, a scathing indictment of post-war Polish history. Written in 1962, the script did not go into production until the mid-1970s, but a crucial scene, referring to the Gdansk workers shot to death during the December 1970 anti-government strikes, had to be cut in order to secure the censor's stamp of approval.

Solidarity, a widespread reform-minded movement, gave artists and

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intellectuals a new feeling of confidence. During the heady 16 months between August 1980 and December 1981, they savoured creative freedom and a real hope for the Solidarity-inspired renewal of Polish culture. The gulf between two kinds of artistic expression—government-approved on the one hand, and unofficial, dissident, and *émigré* on the other—became somewhat less obvious. The arts, which had been frightened into self-censorship and ambiguity, were now more open and direct in their explorations of Polish reality.

ALTHOUGH denied access to the strictly-controlled media, Solidarity had nevertheless won an unprecedented relaxation of censorship in the arts, unheard of in other communist bloc countries. On 31 July 1981, after a prolonged and dramatic debate, the Seym passed a law which limited censorship to strictly security affairs and other matters potentially embarrassing to the Soviet Union.

The new law did not take effect until October 1981, but many censorship restrictions had been lifted almost overnight following the registration of Solidarity by Poland's Supreme Court in November 1980. Manuscripts, films and television productions, which had been collecting dust in the censor's vault, were finally made public. Works by such blacklisted writers as Czeslaw Milosz, Witold Gombrowicz, Stanislaw Baranczak, Tadeusz Konwicki, Kazimierz Brandys and Jerzy Andrzejewski were once again published by official, rather than clandestine, presses or produced in state-subsidized theatres. Only a year previously, Polish customs officials would confiscate *émigré* editions of Gombrowicz or Milosz. Now the same works were " standing-room only " attractions at official theatre festivals. For example, the 1981 annual theatre festival in Jelenia Gora featured dramatizations of Milosz's *Moral Treatise*, Gombrowicz's *Trans-Atlantic*, and Baranczak's *Artificial Respiration*. Meanwhile, Milosz's *Captive Mind*, which the philosopher Karl Jaspers has described as " a significant historical document and analysis of the highest order," remained banned. So did Milosz's autobiographical *Native Realm* and Gombrowicz's *Diaries*, each in its own way critical of the mentality that informs politics and society under communism.

Theatres throughout Poland produced documentary dramas dealing with the earlier, unsuccessful labour protests of 1956, 1970 and 1976. Long suppressed by the authorities, historical evidence of those events finally began to leak out and was used most notably in Izabella Cywinska's *Defendant: June 1956*, sold out many months in advance at the Nowy Theatre in Poznan. Another well-attended docu-drama was *Reports* at the Maly Theatre in Warsaw. An adaptation of Hanna Krall's interviews, it focused on three people whose individual lives became at one point intertwined with major events in Poland's recent history: Lechoslaw Gozdzik, a car-plant worker who led the October 1956 strikes in Warsaw; Janusz Prokopiak, a Radom Party official who was almost lynched during the workers' protests in June 1976; and Anna

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Walentynowicz, the shipyard worker and outspoken critic of the government, who was among the founding members of Solidarity.

Kazimierz Dejmek, a prominent theatre director whose production of Adam Mickiewicz's *Forefathers' Eve* at the Warsaw Narodowy Theatre in March 1968 had touched off an earlier revolt of students and intellectuals, was allowed to work again in the capital. The dissident Eighth Day Theatre in Poznan, whose audiences had been frequently barred from productions by the secret police, was permitted to perform freely at home and abroad. And the authorities no longer directed drama critics to publish malicious attacks against the Eighth Day's work.

Wajda's internationally acclaimed *Man of Marble*, which had been withdrawn from domestic distribution after its sporadic release in 1977, suddenly reappeared in Polish cinemas in the autumn of 1980. Had it not been for the Solidarity movement, a 1973 television version of Jerzy Mikke's play, *It's Dangerous, Mr. Mochnacki*, and feature films such as Jerzy Skolimowski's *Hands Up!* (1967), Krzysztof Kieslowski's *Calmness* (1976), Janusz Kijowski's *The Index* (1977) or Marcel Lozinski's *How to Live* (1977) still would have been prohibited as " threatening to the national interest." During 1980–81, those carefully stored reels began to surface at festivals and film clubs. At the same time, however, the authorities painstakingly controlled the distribution of *Workers '80*, a deeply stirring documentary film of the strike and the negotiations in the Gdansk shipyards, directed by Andrzej Chodakowski and Andrzej Zajaczkowski. (Newspaper notices for screenings of *Workers '80* usually carried the curious warning: " Sold Out " or " Private Screening.") And Glowacki's film script *Give Us This Day*, also dealing with the birth of Solidarity, did not pass the censor's inspection and was subsequently published without official approval. Only Wajda's *Man of Iron*, produced as a sequel to *Man of Marble* at the request of the Gdansk workers, enjoyed unrestricted showings—owing possibly to the international reputation of Poland's most celebrated film-maker, or possibly to pressure from the workers themselves.

THE restrictions on *Workers '80* and the tight control of the news media made it clear that, to the authorities, the August 1980 agreements with the workers were not even worth the paper they were written on. In violation of the original accords, the government was not willing to relinquish its grip on national culture. In protest, Solidarity drew up at its first congress in October 1981 a programme of cultural and educational reforms, which reiterated the initial demands for freedom of speech and information. " Culture and education," proclaimed the programme,

> cannot be used to impose uniform beliefs and to create attitudes of submission and passivity. . . . One of the principal reasons for the crisis in [Polish] culture and education is the state monopoly in these areas. Society should be in control of its own culture and its own

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> education. . . . To say and to write the truth is essential for the development of social awareness and the safeguarding of our national identity. To construct a better future, it is necessary to know the truth of the present.

Solidarity's programme recommended the creation of a national endowment for the arts and increased spending for education and research. The new labour federation was also planning to open its own independent university, research institutes and libraries of uncensored publications.

Suspended in December 1981 and outlawed 10 months later, Solidarity was blocked from carrying out its ambitious programme. However, during the 16 months of its existence, the union spearheaded a number of events which had a crucial influence on the national consciousness.

In December 1980 and June 1981, Solidarity organized celebrations in memory of the earlier abortive protests in Gdansk and Poznan. These celebrations included the unveiling of memorials to the workers killed in 1956 and 1970, in addition to riveting, starkly political performances by individual artists and the Eighth Day Theatre. Solidarity also organized in August 1981 a festival of uncensored protest songs in Gdansk. In Katowice, centre of the coal-mining industry, the union sponsored a four-hour pageant entitled *Romantic Tragedy*. During the summer of 1981, it played every night to some 8,000 miners and their families. Adapted from two early nineteenth-century poetic dramas, Mickiewicz's *Forefathers' Eve* and Juliusz Slowacki's *Kordian, Romantic Tragedy* was presented as neither a museum piece nor inspirational propaganda, but as a patriotic parable of Poland's centuries-long struggle against Russian domination.

Those mass events captured and illuminated the experience of the audiences. They bridged the old and the new, creating a vital link with the nation's past. Their aesthetics and ostensible purpose varied, but their thrust was to reinforce the communal sense, or the feeling that something crucial is at stake. Important rites of national renewal, the events provided a raw and immediate communication among people of various backgrounds and created an increased awareness of one's connexions with others.

AMID the enthusiasm and optimism, fuelled by a new hope for the democratization of the system, Solidarity itself became the subject of a wide variety of works. They ranged from *Man of Iron*, combining documentary footage with dramatic reconstructions of actual events and featuring Lech Walesa and Anna Walentynowicz in cameo appearances, to *Carol Night*, a tear-jerking musical by Ernest Bryll and Wojciech Trzcinski. Some of the works were crude in form and hasty in execution, but electrifying in their topicality. Others were unadulterated rubbish. The line between art and *kitsch* was often very thin, and even Wajda was attacked for capitalizing on news headlines and for catering to current popular taste. One respected Polish critic has called *Man of Iron* " a

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perfect example of socialist realism *au rebours*. . . . It is a story about the good Bolshevik fighting the bad czarist system, only the good guys are called Solidarity and the bad ones are the Polish government."[1] Wajda has thus defended the blunt, almost propagandistic forcefulness of his film: " I felt as if I were one of the members of the [Solidarity] movement, I wanted to do something direct, to enrol myself on [the workers'] side, not just as an interlocutor in discussions, but as an artist."[2]

There were also plans to dramatize the Gdansk negotiations between the government and the workers. Writer Janusz Glowacki was among those who warned against this kind of Solidarity-inspired, populist docu-drama: " Well, the shipyards, that's a grand subject. A chance for us all to be deeply and communally moved. But also a perfect chance for falsehoods, half-truths, and an updated version of socialist realism."[3] Glowacki's response to the shipyard strikes and to social turmoil was a powerful one-act play, *Journey to Gdansk*, the first literary or dramatic work to deal with the emergence of Solidarity. With its ironical distance and rejection of hurrah-optimism, *Journey to Gdansk* is anything but a socialist-realist docu-drama. It shows a man with a university degree in history, underemployed as a magazine reporter. He is offered the chance to travel to the Gdansk shipyards during the August 1980 strikes. The reporter would like to witness history in the making, but at the same time he is afraid that the trip to Gdansk might jeopardize his career, should the workers lose. He has already lost his position at a research institute, possibly for his involvement in the 1968 protests. Placed in an untenable position, he struggles to reconcile two opposites in Poland's post-war history: moral integrity and peace of mind. *Flashback*, Glowacki's sequel to *Journey to Gdansk*, details a strange encounter between a man working for the Polish Security Services and a writer who has been loyal to the regime. They sip tea laced with vodka, stare at a poster of Solidarity's first congress, and reassure each other: " Don't get upset. This Solidarity business—it's nothing serious. Everything'll get back to normal." These lines seem also to have been prophetic in warning Poles that the struggle for truth and justice is not yet over.

IN the post-war history of Polish culture, Solidarity's major role was not, however, as an inspiration for artists. Rather, the independent labour movement provided a political and social framework in which unhampered artistic expression suddenly became possible. Polish artists were finally able to cast off half-truths and ambiguities, to which official propaganda had long condemned them. In a political system, where the Communist Party insists upon being the sole interpreter of reality, this was a remarkable and hopeful development.

With martial law came an " unprecedented pogrom on Polish

[1] *American Film*, Jan.-Feb. 1982.
[2] *New York Times*, 17 Oct. 1982.
[3] *Dialog*, Jan. 1981.

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culture," to use Stanislaw Baranczak's phrase.[4] Many artists and intellectuals, including Andrzej Czeczot, Ryszard Krynicki, Jacek Kuron, Jozef Kusmierek, Adam Michnik and Wiktor Woroszylski, were interned, and others forced underground or into self-imposed exile. Universities and theatres were closed down, cultural activities banned, and radio and television entirely militarized. Except for the army paper, *Zolnierz Wolnosci*, and the Party organ, *Trybuna Ludu*, all newspapers and magazines were shut down, and their editorial boards purged of those who refused to sign a declaration of loyalty. The existing channels of communication constantly repeated the single, simple message that socialism is endangered by both internal and external enemies.

All professional organizations, such as the Polish Writers' Union (ZLP), the Association of Polish Film-Makers (SFP) and the Actors' Association (ZASP), were suspended following charges that they had been infiltrated by " members of KOR " and " agents of Radio Free Europe." The Association of Polish Journalists (SDP), formed in 1951, was replaced by a new propaganda outfit: the Association of Journalists of the Polish People's Republic (SD PRL). Ideologically determined guidelines for the content of the media and arts have been re-imposed, and the criteria of political reliability and ethical pliability once again stamped out professional qualifications.

With strict censorship reinstated, some 240 official periodicals (out of 271 in 1981) gradually resumed publication. The first weekly magazines to reappear were *Zycie Literackie* (on 14 February 1982) and *Polityka* (on 20 February 1982), edited by a Party hard-liner, Wladyslaw Machejek, and deputy Prime Minister Mieczyslaw F. Rakowski, respectively. The Catholic *Znak* emerged in March, *Scena* and *Wiez* in April, *Tworczosc*, *Dialog*, and the Catholic *Tygodnik Powszechny* in May, *Odra* in July and *Teatr* in September. New, propagandist publications, such as *Rzeczpospolita*, *Veto*, *Tu i Teraz*, *Przeglad Tygodniowy*, *Tworczosc Robotnicza*, *Zdanie* and *Rzeczywistowc*, continued to multiply. Yet *Kultura* and *Literatura*, which had been among the most popular literary reviews, were accused of anti-socialist sympathies and were dissolved.

For many writers, the decision to join the government-approved periodicals was not an easy one. The dilemma was perhaps best expressed by an editorial in the July–August issue of the literary monthly *Odra*. Its new editor, Ignacy Rutkiewicz, who had replaced Waldemar Kotowicz, challenged somewhat defensively Poland's silent majority:

> *Odra* wants to maintain its identity and . . . meet the test of our time. Between the destructive " Everything or nothing " and a rigid adherence to guidelines, there seems to be room for those who want to speak out on their own. One cannot pretend that nothing has happened. If there is any way out, it only can be, we think, through bringing to light a variety of views, arguments, and actions. We are

[4] *The American Scholar*, Autumn 1982.

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> aware of the risks and limitations involved. But let us not forget that silence can also become an object of manipulation.

In an attempt to prove that *Odra* is indeed open to different opinions, the September issue carried a rebuttal of Rutkiewicz's editorial. Signed " A Pessimist," the anonymous letter rejected the editor's wishful thinking that under martial law a state-supported publication can carve out a degree of independence for itself:

> If a majority of people have chosen silence as a means of protest . . . then one's moral obligation is to support that protest. Even in silence there should be solidarity. This is the only way out. To keep lines of communication open and to seek truth are two different things. . . . The lack of solidarity at a crucial moment cannot be justified by any shop-worn witticisms.

This exchange between Rutkiewicz and the anonymous " Pessimist " created the illusion of an unrestrained flow of opinions. The illusion was maintained by all official magazines. For example, in a strikingly ironic article, *Polityka* ridiculed film-maker Bohdan Poreba, an ideological enemy of Wajda and the chairman of the Grunwald Patriotic Association, a nationalistic and anti-semitic group created with the support of high Party officials in March 1981. *Polityka* also published a letter-to-the-editor from a Polish employee of the Warsaw-based International Association of the Miners' Union, who rejected as unrealistic the concept of apolitical labour federations, promoted by the anti-Solidarity media campaign. When Czeslaw Milosz, 1980 Nobel Prize winner, signed a letter to the West German government denouncing its refusal to uphold American sanctions against Poland and the Soviet Union, *Tu i Teraz* attacked him as " a demagogue " and " a cheap agitator." Meanwhile, *Zycie Literackie* brought out in weekly instalments Milosz's essays collected in *Visions from San Francisco Bay*. *Zycie Literackie* also published Leszek Bugajski's cautiously favourable review of Jerzy Andrzejewski's *Pulp*, a politically and artistically forceful novel, which appeared in a censored version early in 1982. But *Polityka*'s Zygmunt Kaluzynski, a film critic who took over as literature and drama specialist after the exodus of the magazine's pro-Solidarity staff, panned the novel, charging Andrzejewski with plagiarism, political opportunism and homosexuality.

Those occasional instances of seeming flexibility and difference of opinion were merely a tightly-controlled substitute for an open debate of crucial public issues. While radio and television sought to influence the audience by presenting a biased perspective of the world outside the people's immediate experience, the print media structured reality through means that are more effective than those supplied by rigid reliance on ideology.

But readers were not deceived by the *ersatz* debates between Rakowski's *Polityka* and Machejek's *Zycie Literackie*. With the regime's showpieces selling worse than ever, the propaganda blitz backlashed. In

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June 1982, for example, 60 per cent of *Rzeczywistosc* copies (weekly circulation: 140,000) was returned by newsagents; 55 per cent of *Przeglad Tygodniowy*'s 59,000; 46 per cent of *Tu i Teraz*'s 65,000; 25 per cent of *Rzeczpospolita*'s 130,000; 20 per cent of *Zycie Literackie*'s 54,000 and *Radar*'s 80,000; and 14 per cent of *Perspektywy*'s 222,000. Once a best-seller, *Polityka* now failed to generate enough interest. Its print-run was lowered from 400,000 (in February) to approximately 370,000 (in July), but 10 per cent of all the copies still remains unsold. Similarly, *Trybuna Ludu* had to reduce its circulation from one million (in November 1981) to about 800,000 (in July 1982).

The declining statistics may be partly explained by 100 to 150 per cent price increases in the print media in early 1982, or by shortcomings in the distribution system (deliveries are erratic, and mail subscription is available only in rural areas). But the major reason is a widespread boycott of the regime's propaganda. Even Daniel Passent, *Polityka* columnist, noted the dwindling sales of the press, which he attributed to Polish society's " frustration, apathy, declining interest in political life under martial law restrictions, . . . disenchantment and depression." In order to win back the readers, Passent called for an upgrading in the quality of the magazine and the attraction of new reporters. He also admitted that *Polityka*'s popularity suffered when many of its writers " took their talents to other periodicals."[5]

Among Passent's enigmatic " other periodicals " is the Catholic *Tygodnik Powszechny*, which became a haven for writers who refuse to collaborate with the martial law propaganda. With a weekly circulation of only 75,000, *Tygodnik Powszechny* is now the most influential of all officially permitted publications. It is also the most heavily censored. Although the martial law decree of 12 December 1981 introduced more stringent censorship guidelines, at least one stipulation of the censorship law of 31 July 1981 remains in effect: every periodical publication has the right to leave a blank space where something has been excised and to cite the censor's legal justification. With self-censorship operating at full tilt, such Party-line magazines as *Polityka* or *Rzeczywistosc* have no need for blank spaces. Moreover, their editors are generally allowed more freedom of expression because the overall thrust of these periodicals leaves no doubt about their political stand. But *Tygodnik Powszechny*, which counteracts the government's principle of *divide et impera* by rallying its readers round the ideals of social justice, fraternity and self-sacrifice, is subject to careful scrutiny by the censor.

PASSENT'S " other publications " is also a veiled reference to growing numbers of clandestine periodicals. Despite a ban on the private acquisition of paper and printing equipment, at least 1,700 underground publications have appeared across the country since the declaration of martial law. In Warsaw, the first issue of *Tygodnik*

[5] *Polityka*, 14 Aug. 1982.

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Wojenny came out on 1 January 1982, followed by *Tygodnik Mazowsze* on 11 February. Warsaw now has over 50 publications, and some 20 exist in Gdansk, including *Biuletyn Informacyjny Solidarnosci* which prints 60,000 copies. Almost every region publishes at least one bulletin, and many large factories have their own. The publications carry information about resistance to martial law, eyewitness accounts of anti-regime strikes and demonstrations, appeals by the leaders of Solidarity's underground Temporary Coordinating Commission (TKK), and even instruction on how to aid political prisoners and their families or on how to build your own printing press. An unexpected boost to the nation's morale came on 12 April 1982 when Solidarity's first underground radio station broadcast a few minutes of uncensored programming.

In an offical press release, General Boguslaw Stachura, deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, claimed that, in 1982, the security forces " halted operation of 360 illegal publishing units and seized 196 printing machines and 468 typewriters. Some 730,000 leaflets, 340,000 illegal publications, and 4,000 posters were confiscated, and 11 radio stations silenced." Yet despite the raids on the underground printing presses, new editors and printers take over almost immediately and resume publication with different equipment and supplies.

I Saw Freedom in Warsaw

" It really was a splendid idea. Fancy calling 10 million people ' a social margin,' an attempt by society to control power ' a bloody civil war,' thousands of people demonstrating in the streets ' loutish ragamuffins'! What an idea to arrest representatives from all social groups and classes, to torture, beat and murder people; and, of course, to announce to the world that in this way the ' agreement ' between power and society would become more realistic, easier and really certain. It was a splendid idea because, as Bernard Margueritte [of *Le Figaro*] wrote, Poland has never been ruled by so many liberals. . . . The communists' dream was that the years 1976–82 would be the end of so-called social crises, i.e. they would like to render impossible any organized revolt of society against the rule of the communist minority. But the truth is different: the events which took place after August 1980 were only the beginning of the process of political self-awareness and demographic change which, in a few years' time, will be more explosive than an entire magazine of gunshot. In a country in which the nineteenth-century [Polish] poets are still read in such a way that their poems may be seen as sparks on a keg of gunpowder, Polish literature of the future will be more frightening to the communists than Solidarity, KOR and the KPN put together. The lesson is a simple one: Polish literature which ' saw freedom in Warsaw ' is a delayed time-bomb. The countdown has already begun."

An anonymous writer in an essay distributed underground in 1983.

The underground publishing network, often called " the other circuit " (*drugi obieg*), puts out not only documentary materials and information bulletins; it also continues to publish literary journals, such as *Zapis* or *Krytyka*, and works of fiction. For example, Marek Nowakowski's *The*

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Canary & Other Tales of Martial Law, the first literary treatment of life in Poland under martial law, appeared outside official channels.[6]

Although written in direct response to the military crackdown, Nowakowski's vivid and pungent *vignettes* are far from anti-government propaganda or indignant moralizing. Events are seen through the eyes of a detached narrator who reports without passing judgment. The stories blend realistic detail and ironic effect, as they mock and amuse, with special comic twists. The proceedings of a verification committee are unwittingly torpedoed by a group of reporters, too drunk to sign a declaration of loyalty. A military patrol, ordered to whitewash over anti-government slogans, cannot determine whether one of them, " Babylon Has Fallen," has a hidden political meaning. An overjoyed elderly lady makes a monitored telephone call to her relatives when her canary starts singing again, but the authorities promptly charge her with sending coded messages. In each of the stories, Nowakowski poignantly combines the serious with the grotesque and the trivial with the bizarre. He uses his wit and vision to cut through layers of pretence and reveal the strengths and weaknesses of modern Polish society.

UNLIKE literature, both film and theatre, dependent on government support, have been all but muzzled by the censor. All politically explicit films, produced during the cultural thaw under the influence of Solidarity, were removed from circulation. Among them are Wajda's *Man of Marble* and *Man of Iron*, Agnieszka Holland's *Fever*, Wojciech Marczewski's *Creeps*, and Ryszard Bugajski's *The Interrogation.* Three of these films—*Man of Marble*, *Creeps*, and *The Interrogation*—deal with the excesses of the Stalinist era in Poland, which again has become a very sensitive historical issue because of striking parallels between the early 1950s and the current political scene.

Man of Marble reconstructs the story of a socialist worker-hero who falls from grace when he uses his celebrity status to defend other workers' rights. *Creeps* is a chilling account of a young boy's political seduction at a Stalinist youth camp, and *The Interrogation* focuses on police intimidations, arrests, tortures, and trials on fabricated charges during the Stalinist period. It also shows the powerful grip of fear on Polish society and individual attempts to overcome terror and apathy.

Completed after the imposition of martial law, *The Interrogation* has never been released, following the recommendation by a committee which met on 23 April 1982 at the Ministry of Art and Culture.[7] The film-censorship proceedings well illustrate the regime's cultural policies, which are founded on disregard for artistic integrity and manipulation of historical truth.

At the meeting, the historian Maria Turlejska defended the film as a " document " and an " historical testimony," based on " consultations

[6] See Marek Nowakowski, " The Canary," pp. 11–12.
[7] See *The New Criterion*, Oct. 1982.

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with people who had gone through this [Stalinist] mangle." But ardent supporters of the regime, including directors Bohdan Poreba and Czeslaw Petelski, rejected *The Interrogation* as " a premeditated lie," " an obscenity," " melodramatic *kitsch*," and " an anti-socialist film, made solely for propagandistic reasons." Mieczyslaw Waskowski, another film-maker and sympathizer with Poreba's Grunwald Patriotic Association, argued that *The Interrogation* " should never have been made," and he demanded a thorough investigation " to determine who is responsible for approving the screenplay, . . . giving the go-ahead to the production . . . [and] allowing this film to be finished . . . even after the state of war was introduced." All the participants in the meeting were concerned with the impact of the film on the national consciousness, had *The Interrogation* reached the cinemas. Both Turlejska and the writer Ernest Bryll pointed out that the film may " bring about a catharsis " by providing " a proof, a kind of test, that certain things won't be repeated, that there is no return to them." But Turlejska and Bryll's arguments went unheeded. Kazimierz Kozniewski, a writer associated with *Polityka*, warned that " a film of such passion will evoke great passions in return." And Jozef Lenart, first secretary of the Party unit at the now suspended Polish Writers' Union, reiterated: " At this moment, it can only electrify the atmosphere further." Thus the critics of Bugajski's film acknowledged that there is a great deal of opposition to the regime among potential audiences. In the final analysis, the committee obviously feared not just the film itself, but the viewers' response to the film.

The same fear, which led to the banning of *The Interrogation*, prompted the martial law regime to close down all theatres for almost two months. (Throughout history, censorship has been more severe on theatre than on any of the other arts: a theatrical representation of reality has directness and immediacy, and thus being more explosive, is more dangerous to the authorities.) By mid-February 1982 the theatres were back in operation, but not without drastic changes. Several productions, most notably Izabella Cywinska's *Defendant: June 1956*, were taken off. Many actors and directors, including Cywinska, Jerzy Kiszkis, Kazimierz Kutz, Halina Mikolajska and Halina Winiarska, were sent to internment camps. Following Cywinska's arrest, Warsaw municipal authorities quickly withdrew their offer to employ her as the artistic director of the Na Woli Theatre. In Gdansk, Maciej Karpinski, who had been selected as the new director of the Wybrzeze Theatre, was replaced by Stanislaw Michalski, actor and member of the Party Central Committee. In Warsaw, Andrezej Jarecki of the Rozmaitosci Theatre, Mariusz Dmochowski of the Nowy Theatre, and Adam Hanuszkiewicz of the Narodowy Theatre were dismissed from their posts as artistic directors. In protest against martial law, Dmochowski and Tadeusz Lomnicki, the well-known actor and the former chancellor of the Theatre School of Warsaw, turned in their Party membership cards; Gustaw Holoubek, director of Warsaw's Dramatyczny Theatre, resigned

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his post as a deputy in the Seym; and Andrzej Kijowski, director of the Slowacki Theatre in Cracow, gave up his position.

Moreover, almost all actors refused to appear on the militarized radio and television, or have their theatre performances taped. The boycott had full support from the Actors' Association, reactivated on 25 June 1982. Actors who ignored the boycott were accused of being collaborators by their colleagues and jeered by audiences when they appeared on stage.[8]

The boycott turned television, often a showcase for original drama, into a dreary series of panel discussions and official speeches, sometimes enlivened by sports events and old films. Incensed by the actors' resistance, the authorities unsuccessfully appealed to ZASP to call off the boycott. Finally, on 1 December, Kazimierz Zygulski, newly-appointed Minister of the Arts and Culture, dissolved ZASP.

SINCE the theatres have been allowed to re-open, contemporary Polish plays have all but disappeared from the repertoire. The sole play dealing with martial law, Jerzy Tymicki's *Waleza* (*sic*!) has circulated in manuscript only. Set in a detention camp and featuring a cross-section of Polish society in addition to a leader of an abortive labour movement, *Waleza* is a verbose drama wallowing in national stereotypes. It is sympathetic to anti-government opposition, but its artistic value is minimal.

Closely monitored by the censor, the theatres have chosen plays and adaptations which are politically uncommitted and seemingly far removed from current political developments. Among the most significant productions were: the Polish première of T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*, directed by Jerzy Jarocki at two major national shrines, St. John's Cathedral in Warsaw and the Wawel Cathedral in Cracow; Krzysztof Babicki's dramatization of *The Book of Job*, entitled *Job*, at the Slowacki Theatre in Cracow; and a stage adaptation of William Faulkner's *A Fable*, at the Eighth Day Theatre in Poznan.

Each of these productions is concerned with moral issues, especially the problem of suffering, rather than immediate political action or existing reality. And yet, performed under martial law, these three productions are imbued by the audiences with a special meaning. *Murder in the Cathedral*, Eliot's finest drama, is based on the story of Archbishop Thomas à Becket's assassination by Henry II's soldiers in 1170. The play concentrates upon the moment of decision, when Becket is caught between his duty to Church and state. Once he has chosen the Church, nothing remains except for him to receive his executioners. Polish audiences are well aware of the historical parallels between Becket's martyrdom and the murder of a Polish bishop, Stanislaw Szczepanowski, by Boleslaw II in 1079, and they find solace in Becket's monologue:

[8] See "Three Actors Speak Out," pp. 33–34.

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I know that history at all times draws
The strangest consequence from remotest cause.
But for every evil, every sacrilege,
Crime, wrong, oppression and the axe's edge,
Indifference, exploitation, you, and you,
And you, must all be punished. So must you.

In *Job*, Babicki has interwoven the Biblical passages with selections from the Psalms. For example, the production reaffirms a simple conviction of reward and punishment: " Blessed is the man / who walks not in the counsel of the wicked " (Psalm 1). It also reassures its audiences with the same lines which are part of the inscription on the Gdansk memorial to the workers killed in December 1970: " The Lord will give strength unto His people / The Lord will bless His people with peace " (Psalm 29). Yet the production does not conclude simply with Job's repentance and a reversal of his fortune, but with a poignant image of Job and his wife struggling to lift a large stone, and carrying it together. Thus *Job* maintains that hardship is inseparable from life itself but, even in pain, suffering and oppression, there is purpose and meaning in a righteous life.

Like *Murder in the Cathedral* and *Job*, *A Fable* also focuses on the protagonist's spiritual growth. He is a corporal who, during the First World War, leads his soldiers to rebellion and is subsequently court-martialled. But his death is seen as a life-giving force. As in Eliot's play, martyrs are made by God for the good of the people.

Despite the religious framework, the three productions, with their strong ethical bent, are anything but escapist. They do not advocate resignation in the face of overwhelming odds. Instead, they teach courage and persistence, and they point out that no sacrifice is too great or too small in the struggle for justice and dignity. Moreover, the protagonists' ordeal is witnessed by the other characters, who make the final judgment of their moral choices. For example, in Babicki's adaptation, Job's wife—rather than God—is the witness of his suffering and innocence. Emphasizing the importance of her presence, Babicki has added a quotation from the writer Karol Irzykowski: " Man will suffer anything but only under one condition—that he has a witness to his suffering."

This key statement in *Job* is also indirectly a tribute to the Polish artists who have historically functioned as the conscience of the nation, fighting against closed eyes and captive minds. The artists bear witness to their time, anticipate the future, and provide important insights about individual existence within the system. Significantly, in December 1980, when the workers of Gdansk were to unveil the memorial to their comrades shot down a decade earlier, they chose for the monument's inscription the following lines from a poem by Milosz: " You who harmed a simple man . . . /Do not feel secure, for a poet remembers." Now, since the imposition of martial law and its token removal, Polish artists have once again found their work emerging as one of the focal points of protest.

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Terror and Revolution: Wajda's *Danton*

" Wajda is not a film-maker in exile, he knows that his pronouncements abroad can be used against him [in Poland]. We must understand this! "

Frédéric Vitoux in *Le Nouvel Observateur* (Paris), 25 Sept. 1982

"' It's clear, ' says Wajda, ' that in this film Danton is not Lech Walesa and Robespierre is not Jaruzelski. And if queues for food outside the shops can be seen, this is not an allusion to the Polish situation: there was famine in Paris in 1793. In Poland everyone knows that my wife and I were active members of Solidarity. I want no gratuitous parallels drawn. Our fight in Poland is one thing and this film, which was made in France, is quite another.' "

Jacques Siclier in *Le Monde (Paris) & La Stampa* (Turin), 8 Jan. 1983

" Andrzej Wajda's film about Danton . . . has provoked furious polemics. In France, to discuss the subject of the French revolution is like throwing a grenade into a fireworks factory. . . . First of all there is the question in the film of the personality of Danton, ' the revolutionary with a human face,' who was sent to the gallows by that cold bureaucrat of terror, Robespierre. . . . The trial and execution of Danton are used by the Polish director to show that every revolution has a totalitarian character and that this trial was nothing but an archetype for the Stalinist and post-Stalinist trials in which ideological guilt always prevails over the evidence. It is this implication, not new by any means, but definitely ' reactionary ' for a certain part of the Left, which provoked some resentment [in France].

"' Revolution is not madness ' was the title of the review written by the Marxist historian Michel Vovelle. It was a full-page spread in *L'Humanité*, the official organ of the French Communist Party."

Gabriele Cane in *Il Giornale* (Milan), 11 Jan. 1983

" My work is for me a way of escape . . ."

Wajda in *L'Express* (Paris), 14 Jan. 1983

" Andrzej Wajda's film *Danton*, shown with great success in the cinemas of Paris, is also the subject of continuing debate in the press. The French socialist government has done much to promote the film: the producer received a subsidy from the Ministry of Culture (something rare in France), French television (which in practice is a state institution) joined the production company, and there were semi-official screenings of the film for the National Assembly and for government personalities (including President Mitterand himself). However, the flow of criticism

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suggests that the impact of the film has backfired on its official promoters because, as the historians argue, it distorts the meaning of the French revolution which belongs to the sacred traditions of the Socialist Party and the French Left in general."

Marek Ostrowski in *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), 17 Jan. 1983

" Far from satisfying the socialists' expectations, the film *Danton* in fact contains a vehement act of accusation against totalitarianism and ideological dictatorship. . . . The trial of Danton, as Wajda justly perceives it, was a prototype for the trial of Bukharin, the antecedent of all fabricated political trials—of those in Moscow in 1936–38, and of those in Budapest and Prague during the Cold War."

Jean-François Revel in *Il Giornale* (Milan), 19 Jan. 1983

" The discomfort of the communists is understandable, they are permitted only one interpretation of the French revolution; and so is the embarrassment of the socialists. . . . For the present government [in France], this film is like a discordant note in ' *La Marseillaise.*' "

François Bondy in *Weltwoche* (Zurich), 26 Jan. 1983

" The trial of Danton is an obvious parallel with the political trials in the USSR and Eastern Europe. The groundlessness and demagogy of the accusations, the stage direction from behind the scenes, the ad hoc invention of new legal procedures, the use of false witnesses, the inclusion into Danton's group of ordinary criminals to sit on the same bench of the accused—this whole scheme is so obvious, so familiar, so recognizable . . . Andrzej Wajda has shown the French revolution as seen from the East, where the logic of revolution has attained its perfect embodiment. He could well have called his film ' *How it all began* . . . .' "

Violette Iverny, *Russkaya Mysl* (Paris), 27 Jan. 1983

" Let us attempt, therefore, to consider the effect of the film from a perspective other than one of national pride, all too easily wounded; its intention may appear odious to us (a bitter blow to the socialists in power in France?), and it links the horror of the guillotine with that of the revolutionary catechism taught by head-bashing. Let us not give in to the cult of personality and let us accept this outsider's iconoclastic view of the founding fathers, whose monument we must perhaps also be able to tear down."

Christian Zimmer, *Le Monde Diplomatique* (Paris), Feb. 1983

" Before Wajda's *Danton* appeared on Polish screens, the press, with obvious satisfaction, quoted French reviews of the film; naturally, only such [reviews] which criticized the film, castigated Wajda for not putting on film an historical text-book, and for the fact that his view of the Danton affair clashed with the official version of events generally

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accepted in France. This allowed our journalistic tricksters to spin a yarn about the alleged historical falsification in the works of Wajda, in, for example, *Man of Marble* and *Man of Iron*.

" However, Wajda's film is not an historical document, and although it reproduces events faithfully, it is not merely an album of costume photographs. It is *a film about the philosophy of revolution*. Of every revolution. The Terror in France could easily be taken for the struggle of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in the Russian revolution. It is also a film about the manipulation of history, about its falsification in the interests of power. . . . Danton opposes terror, Danton defends the press, Danton is popular—therefore Danton must die."

An anonymous review in the underground weekly
Wola (Warsaw), No. 7 (49), 21 Feb. 1983

" What the Poles get out of *Danton* is quite different from what Western Europeans see. Art follows its own logic in a totalitarian system; its every ambiguity works against those in power. . . . After the film's Paris première a spectator cried out to the audience: ' How can anyone still be a leftist nowadays? ' That question would make no sense in Warsaw: the world there is divided not into left and right, but into those who favor the security of dictatorship and those who simply want freedom."

Leopold Unger in the *International Herald Tribune* (Paris), 22 Feb. 1983

" What a relief! At last we have here a great and magnificent historical film, with extremely controversial—for the historians at least—figures from the past in the forefront, and there is no need to quarrel about its historical accuracy. Is this only due to the fact that it is not about our own history, but is concerned with the past of others? Or because certain slight, and even not so slight, errors about the by now ancient history of the French Revolution may pass unnoticed by us? Or because we can disregard them, since they do not affect our own emotional sensibilities? This would be an over-simplification, although such suspicions are not entirely without reason. But only very little reason. We relive our own history with great pain indeed, desiring above all to see its real shape, eagerly seeking out relevant analogies. And here we have a film with what seems to be an assured sense of emotional and cognitive distance. This is true. But the distant revolutionary history in the film is neither unknown to us, nor is the director's fidelity to it a matter of indifference to us. The distance which facilitates objectivity only serves to allow us to distinguish that which is most essential in the artistic image on the screen from that which is not worth disputing because it is quite unimportant or irrelevant to the director's conception. But it is quite a different story for the French, judging by the innumerable reviews of the film in the French press of all political hues. Is this solely due to the fact that this history is incomparably better known to them, thousands of miles closer and more

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alive, being quite simply their own? Not at all. It is also because the affluent, pleasure-seeking, bourgeois in France is to such a degree, and amazingly so, inclined to succumb to the revolutionary mythology [censored] (——) [The Decree of 12 December 1981: On the State of War Section II, Article 17, paragraph 4 (The Official Gazette No. 29, paragraph 154)]. And no matter what kind of details or correctives French historians may introduce when comparing the film's vision of the epoch, dominated by the sinister shadow of Robespierre, with their own reconstructions of the past, Wajda's *Danton* will remain a strikingly true image. Because the truth of the matter is in its essence; it is concerned with the real crux of the problem and not with its simple factual or narrative trimmings. [censored] (——) [The Decree of 12 December 1981: On the State of War, Section II, Article 17, paragraph 4 (The Official Gazette No. 29, paragraph 154)]! For many it is already an obvious truth that an uncontrolled mechanism of mass revolt, which is buttressed by the political struggles of individuals ruthlessly fighting for power, releases terror and eventually becomes a self-assertive, destructive force with a momentum of its own in a vicious circle of increasingly cruel repressions, arrests, faked political trials which challenge the most elementary sense of justice, and mass executions which in the end extend even to the initiators and very helmsmen of this suicidal movement. Terror and revolution create a pathological social syndrome, against whose destructive power the last defence can only be the free word: the word of truth, of exposure, of warning. But it is precisely against this word that followers of terror direct their blows in the first place. . . . The truth of Wajda's *Danton* is not something new, but the value of the work of art does not lie in its revealing of knowledge. However, it is quite another matter for a good part of the contemporary world, including many French audiences, for whom the work of the Polish director may indeed be shockingly revealing. [censored] (——) [The Decree of 12 December 1981: On the State of War, Section II, Article 17, paragraph 4 (The Official Gazette No. 29, paragraph 154)] Finally there is the portrayal of these complicated problems shown in their human dimension, through the drama and tragedy of the prominent individuals who propel the mad wheels of history, which still manage to escape control by human hands. The value of the film will also be judged by the moral message discreetly concealed in it. [censored] (——) [The Decree of 12 December 1981: On the State of War, Section II, Article 17, paragraph 4 (The Official Gazette No. 29, paragraph 154)] Wajda investigates the gap between the exalted words of '*La Marseillaise*' intoned for demogogic purposes, the seductive slogans of the egalitarian-libertarian ideology, and the reality of revolutionary lawlessness, misery and violence, red with the blood flowing from the guillotine, dark with the outrages of the secret police and the gangs of *sans-culottes*, grey with the hungry queues for bread."

Tadeusz Szyma in *Tygodnik Powszechny* (Cracow),
27 Feb. 1983

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" [In France] *Danton* created an uproar and caused irritation and embarrassment at the highest level, an achievement indeed for a director born in Suwalki (21,000 inhabitants).

" Most of all, however, *Danton* infuriated the [French] historians. For us [Poles], the film's distortions mattered little, but it was different in France where it was a question of national heroes whose monuments are all over the place . . . ' The spontaneous upheaval of the people is treated by Wajda as the affair of a wicked tyrant.' The [French] historians also explain the Terror itself. ' The revolution had many enemies, powerful, ruthless and cruel, and it would not have survived had it not been equally strong.' "

Zygmunt Kaluzynski in *Polityka* (Warsaw), 5 Mar. 1983

" Wajda . . . regards the entire revolutionary process as sinister and absurd.

" Are the shots of people standing in bread lines the only Polish connection in the film? During showings of *Danton* in Warsaw, passages like the one in which Danton's ally Desmoulins hails freedom of the press will certainly stir the audience. But otherwise, Poles will see little that bears directly on their problems. . . . Indeed, the only possible connection with Poland is the film-maker's own disillusionment, which resulted in the bias that dominates the film from start to finish. . . .

" [there is] for anyone but a reactionary, no need to go back to bloodthirsty gods and the vision of revolution as a malediction. . . . There was a time when it seemed sufficient to argue that revolutions should fight their enemies and not just devour their children, that they are justified in attacking the right and mistaken in attacking the left. But once the mincing machine is set in motion it keeps on chopping, and that compels us to re-examine such concepts as the party, the active minority, the revolutionary vanguard; to ponder the links between ends and means, between the way power is seized and the way it is exercised. But to re-examine does not mean to give up or to yield to the fashionable hypocrisy of abstract moralising. . . . The left has every reason to initiate a debate about the differences between reform and revolution, about the efficacy of change from above versus upheaval from below—*provided* that it is not dragged into enemy territory and into that never-never land outside the realm of history where all cheats can be preachers. For understandable reasons, Andrzej Wajda seems to have been led astray into this land of distorted abstraction. . . . He would have had a better chance of succeeding if he had understood that all politics in the Soviet bloc have been post-Thermidorian for a very long time. In this phase, Jaruzelski stands for despotic rule, and the shipyard workers of Gdansk—like the Parisian 'ultras'—are the forerunners of the revolutions of tomorrow."

Daniel Singer in *The Nation* (New York), 12 Mar. 1983

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" I found unforgettable the scene in which the printing presses are destroyed—and Desmoulins wrote in his *Cordelier* (which the revolution censored and then burned): '. . . Give Moscow the freedom of the press, and tomorrow Russia is a republic!' One doesn't have to guess very hard about the thoughts of the cinema public in Warsaw . . . ."

François Bondy in *Encounter* (London), May 1983

Wajda for the Guillotine

" *The next question [at a Press Conference for foreign journalists in Warsaw] referred to the recent changes in personnel in the film units.*

" ' Indeed,' said Jerzy Urban, ' such changes have taken place. In film unit ' X ' three people have been dismissed from directorial positions. They are the director of the unit Andrzej Wajda, the literary manager Boleslaw Michalek, and the executive producer Barbara Pec-Slesicka. This decision is the result of the assessment by the Ministry of the Arts and Culture, an assessment shared by the Party organization of the unit. It refers to the particular concentration in film unit ' X ' of activities contrary to the state's cultural policy. The negative assessment of the unit's programme policy does not mean its disbandment, but only changes in its directorate.' "

Trybuna Ludu (Warsaw), 4 May 1983

" Polish film director Andrzej Wajda described as ' ridiculous ' the reasons given by official Polish sources for his dismissal from Warsaw film unit ' X '. . . . Wajda rejected the charges of the Polish government spokesman Jerzy Urban, who said that he had spent too much time away from Poland. ' In 1982,' said the director, ' I was shooting the Franco-Polish film *Danton*.' After that, Wajda spent six months in Poland. He has only now gone to Germany to work on a new film. Initially, it was going to be a Franco-Polish-German co-production. ' But then,' explains the director, ' Polish participation was not approved by the authorities, who, moreover, have forbidden Polish actors to take part in this film.'

" Wajda interprets the fact that the Polish government has not given him authorization to make a film about the Pope's forthcoming visit to Poland, as an indication that it has a different plan in mind. Wajda stresses that it was the Polish Episcopate which gave him the assignment to make this film."

La Stampa (Turin), 6 May 1983

" The news about the dismissal of Andrzej Wajda as the director of film unit ' X,' has been exploited by part of the Western press to unleash an anti-Polish campaign and to attack all the actions of our state authorities, without exception. Some West European newspapers presented the dismissals as a ' threat to Polish culture.' Unfortunately, Andrzej Wajda himself supported this campaign, announcing to the German press agency that he considered his dismissal as an attempt to prevent him from pursuing his artistic work in Poland. This is a completely unfounded assertion which is contrary to the truth and to the intentions of the [Polish] film authorities. . . . I wish to stress that working in a directorial position in the state hierarchy demands loyalty to one's superiors, to the state authorities and its policies. Attacking the state in public statements abroad, published as part of the accusatory campaign conducted in the USA and Western Europe, clashes with the principle of loyalty. Andrzej Wajda's attitude to the changes in the directorate of film unit ' X,' and to our cultural policy, only confirms that the decision to entrust the direction of this unit to another director was necessary."

Trybuna Ludu (Warsaw), 12 May 1983

On 5 June 1983 Andrzej Wajda was forced to resign from the presidency of the suspended Polish Film-Makers' Union.

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Three Actors Speak Out*

"THE [actors'] boycott [of the media] began spontaneously and no one imagined that it would become so widespread. For me, personally, the most wonderful thing is that the boycott has been supported by young unknown actors, for whom taking over the role of another actor would have been their big chance. A well-known actor can afford to change his profession, but if an unknown actor starts mending shoes, nobody will recognize him as an actor anymore—he would just be a cobbler.

" It turns out that actors, usually such a divided profession, can become a united group worthy of the great tradition of generations of Polish actors. It turns out that it is not an immoral profession, but has its own dignity. People now have great respect for us—strangers stop me in the street and thank me.

" It certainly is not true—contrary to the claims of official propaganda—that a minority is terrorizing the majority. It is not even that those who have not joined the boycott are being ostracized: one simply does not wish to have any contact with them. No one has vandalized their cars—but this has happened to a number of actors who have refused to comply [with the authorities] (Maja Komorowska, Kazimierz Kaczor) . . . Can the authorities deal with the boycott? Not unless they militarize the profession. . . .

" . . . Why are the authorities suddenly so desperate to reach the masses? What is the reasoning behind their campaign against the actors? A court without its jesters is no longer a court. . . . The authorities are trying to punish us and stir up discord within society. . . . No other profession depends so much on society: we cease to exist without our audiences and we have abandoned them.

" . . . I suspect, however, that we might be made dependent on and responsible to not the theatre but the Ministry of Culture and the Arts—as state employees. . . . I have not regretted my decision even for a moment. I would not be able to look myself in the face if I broke down—for me this is the most important thing. . . ."

* * * * *

" THE boycott was started by society, not by the actors. . . . The worst thing is that society demands a lot from us and gives nothing in return. Somehow they must save us, I don't know how. Perhaps they should write slogans about us on the walls, or set up relief funds for unemployed actors. I, for one, cannot make ends meet on my earnings. The situation is disastrous for young actors, whose absence will not be noticed by anyone anyway.

* See p. 201 in *Poland Under Jaruzelski*, Part I, on Primate Glemp's proposal to the actors to abandon their boycott.

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Solidarity with the Polish Actors, 1–8 Jan. 1983

" The [unofficial] Polish Theatre Week in Warsaw was very successful. Performances were sold out. Organized groups of Solidarity branches at specific enterprises would frequently buy up all the tickets to be had, sometimes even saying openly that they were for members of Solidarity. . . . Employees of one Warsaw hospital bought 30,000 zlotys worth of tickets.

" In the Polish Theatre on 6 January, even before the performance began, the proscenium was covered with flowers and after the performance the audience chanted ' Solidarity!' and ' ZASP!' for 15 minutes. . . . Some children ran onto the stage in the Wspolczesny Theatre, carrying a bouquet of flowers tied with bows, on which was written ' From Solidarity—with thanks to the actors.' There was a sea of flowers in the Powszechny Theatre and the audience shouted ' Thank you.' The same happened in many other theatres, and not only during this Week. . . ."

Uncensored Poland—News Bulletin (London), 28 Jan. 1983

" . . . Our heroism lies not in our participation in the boycott but in the fact that we act at all under such circumstances. And the theatres are empty. . . .

" All actors are heroes now, but perhaps it would have been better to tone it down a bit and prevent the dissolution of ZASP (the Actors' Association)."

* * * * *

" NO ONE wanted to be seen on the same television screens as the despised faces. I once entered radio headquarters and was shocked by the guards and soldiers. It would be humiliating to work at gun-point.

" Our culture could deteriorate in the same way as in Czechoslovakia. Everything would become shallow and bland. It's almost comical; all over the world actors are fighting to get audiences and in our country the authorities order us to appear on television and take money for it. . . . It is very hard for actors to make ends meet. And they are given very little help. We have only received one food parcel from the West and it was distributed among the whole profession, including the collaborators.

" There is a clause about cooperation with Solidarity in our Association's statutes, but ZASP did not protest about its de-legalization. The Association as such did not stand in the way of the authorities; by dissolving ZASP they wanted to strike at the actors themselves. . . . Actors have twice been punished—first by being deprived of Solidarity and then of ZASP."

Tygodnik Mazowsze (published underground in Warsaw), No. 36, 1 Dec. 1982

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The Mirage of Economic Reform

J. Krok-Paszkowski

THERE are words in the official Polish vocabulary today which have clearly lost their logical meaning and instead have attained a magical quality. They are used mainly as a distortion of reality but they are also useful when used as blackmail against political opponents. Occasionally they are instrumental in casting a spell over the population as a whole. Thus, although no one in Poland wants to be called unpatriotic, everybody knows that in public parlance the word " patriot " describes somebody who blindly obeys authority. Again, no one dares criticize socialism, although if one tries to analyse the historical or indeed the political meaning of the word " socialism," one would be immediately suspected of anti-state activity. We know that democracy in Eastern Europe means one-party rule, people's power equals dictatorship, and we also know that military commissars appointed by General Jaruzelski were sent to factories to " express the workers' will."

There is yet another word in the official vocabulary which escapes clear definition: the word " reform."

When in 1980 Polish workers organized themselves into a trade union, which they called Solidarity, they declared that the improvement of the economic situation in Poland could only be achieved through economic reforms. When General Jaruzelski staged his *coup d'état* at the end of 1981, he immediately said that he, too, was interested in the implementation of economic reforms.

Reforms have been talked of since the death of Stalin. In 1956, when Poland experienced a brief period of political " thaw," a detailed programme of economic reform was prepared and people believed that the whole system would gradually be transformed. Some changes were introduced but then the whole process was bogged down, partly for political and partly for bureaucratic reasons. The Polish leader at the time, Wladyslaw Gomulka, acclaimed at first as the communist embodiment of national aspirations, soon began to introduce repressive measures which put Poland firmly on the road to political and economic stagnation. Other rebellions followed and a more " pragmatic " leader was chosen to lead the Party and the nation to a better future. Indeed Edward Gierek, with his reputation for efficiency and with the public image of a man with a Western flavour, announced his own programme of reforms. Another Poland was to be built. Production was to be doubled within 10 years and Poland's links with the industrialized West were to be substantially strengthened. The first few years of Gierek's rule brought about an unprecedented growth in investments, and a marked improvement in the standard of living. In the early 1970s the average Pole was an optimist who expected a speedy improvement in his living

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standard, and also believed that civil rights would be respected and political freedom widened.

The official propaganda machine launched an almost hysterical campaign in order to convince the population that success was well within reach. Statistics of growth were conveniently used to demonstrate " a great leap forward." Hardly any mention was made of foreign credits, very little thought was given to profitability, efficiency, and indeed the economic sense of introducing high technology while neglecting the necessary infrastructure. Nor did the authorities worry about expanding the production capacity of those industries with no secure basis of raw materials.

Soon Gierek's policy of expansion began to show signs of strain. By 1974 Poland was still considered to be credit-worthy and the inflow of money from the West was on the increase. This inflow of capital kept the economy going, but many economists in Poland raised their voices against overheating the economy, which by that time was showing serious cracks that could no longer be ignored.

Gierek's team again took solace in the magic word " reform." A new term was coined: the country was to embark upon " an economic manoeuvre." This was synonymous with the general slowing down and the shifting of resources from investment in heavy industry to improvements in the infrastructure, in transport and in the food economy.

The economic manoeuvre was singularly unsuccessful. The reasons for this are worth studying, although no such study has ever been published in Poland. Nevertheless it is quite clear that if fully implemented, the economic manoeuvre could have saved Gierek's skin, as well as the Polish economy from disaster. There were strong vested interests pitted against the economic manoeuvre. These vested interests were embodied mainly in the vast and powerful bureaucracy and also, strangely enough, in the leadership of the Party. This leadership had entangled itself with several " magic formulae " which made it politically impossible to withdraw from the path of " progress," " growth," " modernization " and " industrialization."

NO communist leader can stop " progress " efficiently in the name of economic reason. The workers' state is not interested in shifting resources from industry to agriculture, even if the consequences of not doing so might cause hunger among the workers. In practical terms the economic manoeuvre was half-heartedly announced by the leadership (who still maintained that heavy industry would retain priority and that technological progress would not be abandoned) and almost totally ignored by the bureaucracy. In fact the bureaucracy was always interested in " growth." Growth favours bureaucrats who are officially urged to overfulfil plans. From a logical point of view, overfulfilment of plans in a centrally-planned economy should be as much of a sin as underfulfilment, for the simple

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reason that the state plan takes into consideration all available resources and allocates them in order to achieve a well-balanced result. It is obvious that if one factory overfulfils its production targets it will use more raw material, more energy and more labour. This in turn means that another factory is faced with shortages. If such practice becomes the norm, the end result is economic disequilibrium. This is exactly what happened in Poland, to a disastrous degree. Bureaucrats, and among these, of course, industrial managers, receive bonuses for overfulfilment of plans, as indeed do the workers. The official propaganda praises them because they can easily be presented as an encouraging example of progress. Growing production figures became the only criteria of success, especially in conditions in which profitability or usefulness of production is difficult, if not impossible, to assess. In other words, the economic plan which apparently has the validity of law is the only measure of success or failure. Consumer needs are hardly ever taken into consideration, nor is the national interest. In these conditions economic activity tends to become almost a ritual in the mysterious process of " building socialism."

During Gierek's rule all these processes and all the problems thus created sharpened significantly because the rate of growth was so rapid. The whole movement maintained its momentum on borrowed money. This created an enormous debt which, as it turned out, could not be repaid by production from the newly-built factories.

One could say that when Gierek embarked upon his programme of massive investments, the industrialized countries of the West were still enjoying economic prosperity. He counted on Western markets to take Polish industrial products as repayment of debts. Some economists in Poland argue that Gierek was unlucky in that, at this particular time, high prosperity in the West turned into deep recession. Nevertheless, even in the best economic climate, the newly-built Polish industry could not really compete on the Western markets. Their products were not of sufficient quality, and their back-up services and marketing were simply inadequate to undertake a major export drive. So Poland was left with mounting debts, and the consequences of the world-wide recession did not help the situation. Many people in Poland are now saying that Gierek probably had good intentions but did not manage to realize them. Others add, with a touch of black humour, that they would rather have leaders with bad intentions who were also unable to realize them.

With the wave of workers' revolts in 1980, and with the emergence of Solidarity, Edward Gierek became a non-person. His successors came on the scene and they again declared their sincere intention to introduce economic reforms.

In order to assess their sincerity, and in order to judge their programme of reforms, one has to analyse, if only briefly, the state of affairs that they inherited from their predecessors.

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EDWARD Gierek was mainly responsible for the almost total demoralization of the Party. His life-style became an example of high-living based on corruption. He became a symbol of the hated and immoral red bourgeoisie. He openly declared that those people who were deserving in the eyes of the Party should be rewarded materially. Illegal economic activity, such as building luxurious villas, or buying expensive foreign cars with public money, became almost fashionable. High Party leaders and state functionaries were given inflated pensions which, after their death, their sons and grandsons would inherit. A modest or poor Party activist was looked upon with contempt and suspicion. The so-called " prominent " people were supposed to represent officialdom in its full splendour. In such a psychological climate, and under such leadership, bureaucrats of all descriptions devoted most of their time to using the system to feather their own beds. This was not a simple game of straightforward theft or embezzlement. Elaborate plans were made to procure the most resources for one's own district, one's own factory, one's own clique. In this game the strong grew stronger at the expense of the weak. Giant industrial enterprises acquired land, building materials, machinery and equipment " for future use." They hired many more employees than they needed. They grew in importance while weaker industries and poorer regions were completely neglected. At the same time they became a political power base for Edward Gierek and his Politburo. As it turned out they were his only political base.

The Guilt Lies With the Creditors

" In the 1970s our economy was linked too strongly with the capitalist market. ' Too strongly ' in the sense that we put ourselves into a credit noose whose ends were in the hands of capitalist politicians, and they could decide when to tighten the noose.

" Already in 1980 and during 1981 there was a decline in the granting of credits to Poland by private banks. The unsettled political and social situation, the fall in production, the consequent diminution of exports and of foreign earnings, and the rapid deterioration in our balance of payments resulted in a situation in which we ceased to be a reliable partner for the capitalist world of finance. The reaction was an abrupt limitation of credits."

Speech by K. Barcikowski, *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), 31 March 1983

With the first signs of economic collapse, when the inflow of money from the West slackened off, when it became necessary to shift the burden on to the consumers, the workers rebelled. It was a strange rebellion in that it was strictly non-violent and was based on moral anger against corruption, inefficiency and waste. The communist ideology became a forgotten and meaningless credo. The new communist leaders were unable to present any programme, political or economic, which would inspire the population to work better and harder. The Communist Party retreated rapidly in the face of growing pressure from Solidarity,

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which became a movement of national rebirth rather than a simple trade union. When the Party was at the edge of total collapse, the police and the military took over. They could offer the people only one thing: the claim that they, and only they, represented the interests of the state. By implication they were telling the people that Poland's very existence depended on the goodwill of the Soviet Union, and that they were the only ones that Moscow could trust to get Poland back on its feet again. Reforms in the economy were obviously necessary.

JARUZELSKI stated that the old system of detailed quantitative planning would be dismantled. The state planning commission would limit its activity to " steering " the economy through the so-called economic parameters, such as prices, interest rates, wages and so on. Furthermore, individual enterprises would become self-managing and self-financing. Banks would be allowed to lend money to enterprises on their merits. Consumer prices and producers' prices would be exposed to the market forces of supply and demand.

On paper, such a programme makes some economic sense, although it is far from being radical. In practical terms, its chances of implementation are slight.

Jaruzelski's decision to use force against the workers, and the repressive measures taken against the great majority of the population, created an especially unfavourable climate for any reforms which would require the involvement of the population. By staging a *coup d'état* Jaruzelski humiliated the Party, as well as the government, and almost totally alienated the nation. Posting military commissars at all levels of administrative and economic activity certainly prevented strikes, but equally efficiently paralysed all activity. Parading large military forces in towns or using security forces against demonstrators created a siege atmosphere which is not conducive to normality.

The reforms, as announced, would require many middle-management people to show initiative and to display a readiness to undertake responsibility. It is highly unlikely that directors of enterprises, managers on the floor level, or indeed workers, would show much enthusiasm for increasing efficiency when they have military commissars with extraordinary powers breathing down their necks.

To put huge industrial enterprises on a military footing is an effective way of preventing strikes and it may even improve work discipline. However, it does not solve major issues of management, or basic economic problems.

In introducing martial law, Jaruzelski counted not only on material support from the Soviet Union, but also on Western help, or at least sympathetic consideration from the West. He probably imagined that all that was needed to put the economy on its feet again was the introduction of strong discipline.

The situation is of course much more complicated, and the state of the

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economy requires economic measures coupled with political courage and imagination, rather than military surgery.

First of all there is the problem of Poland's indebtedness. The 26 billion dollars or so which Poland owes the West would not be an alarming sum if Poland's economy was in good working order. Many other countries have much larger debts and still remain solvent. Poland is virtually bankrupt although no one wants to declare it openly: Western governments, as well as Western bankers, are re-scheduling Poland's repayments which, in practical terms, is equal to an informal moratorium. It is reasonable to assume that, but for Jaruzelski's harsh action, the West would have been prepared to mount a rescue operation and so provide Poland with an economic package which would substantially help the Polish economy. Such help is urgently needed, as neither Polish industry nor agriculture can fully use their production potential without Western raw materials, Western technology, Western spare parts and indeed Western credits.

The Soviet Union helped Poland to a degree, but the other Comecon countries used repressive measures towards Poland by cutting their exports whenever Poland was unable to fulfil its contractual obligations to them.

AFTER over a year of Jaruzelski's rule his government claims certain successes in economic performance. The extraction of coal has been increased substantially and Poland has achieved some surplus in trade with the West. These successes are short-lived and artificial. In the coal industry it is fairly easy to increase extraction of coal when military discipline is introduced. However, the economic and indeed ecological consequences may be disastrous. Safety measures are neglected and there have been reports of loss of life. Exploitation of the best and easiest coal faces leads to the neglect and waste of more difficult seams. There is also the question of priority. The fact is that with the falling price of coal on the world markets, and the diminishing demand for coal in Poland itself, caused by the general economic decline, the exploitation of mines is not the most important task facing the government.

As far as the improvement of the trade balance with the West is concerned, this has been achieved by drastic cuts in imports and not by any substantial increase in exports. Again the consequences are extremely serious. One can envisage a major technological decline in the Polish economy. This could set Poland back in the technological field by perhaps 30 years. Such opinions have been voiced unofficially by many Polish economists.

Now Jaruzelski's team talks self-assuredly of gearing the Polish economy towards the Soviet Union which, as they say, is the largest producer of oil, has all the necessary raw materials and is one of the most powerful industrial bases. Again, in practical terms, this does not necessarily mean that Poland will benefit from the fact that the Soviet Union has all these assets. It is well known that deliveries of Soviet oil to

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East European countries have always been very restricted. Moreover the price paid for this oil will be less attractive because of falling oil prices on the world market. It is also known that Soviet technology is advanced only in certain fields and this will be of little help to Poland. The major problem is Poland's dependence on food imports. The Soviet Union cannot adequately feed its own population and has to import large quantities of grain. The situation in Poland is even worse. Many Polish economists have been warning the government that only the United States is able to provide Poland with the necessary food. In the present circumstances, Jaruzelski's government has little chance of getting American grain. Poland used to import as much as 8 million tons of grain annually. Now the import of grain is uncertain and irregular, as well as greatly reduced.

IT would seem that the major priority for any government in Poland would be agriculture. It is true that Jaruzelski is trying not to antagonize the farmers. He keeps assuring everybody that private farmers are a permanent feature of the Polish economy and have a secure future. It is not enough, however, to give such assurances in order to induce farmers to increase their production. Since the very beginning of communist rule in Poland agriculture has been neglected and run down. When, during the Solidarity days, the elected leader of rural Solidarity, Jan Kulaj, was asked to join the workers' strike, he answered: " we have been on strike for the past 37 years." There is much truth in this. Polish farmers have been on a sort of strike because they have been treated as a dying race that has no place in a socialist state. Their produce was bought by the state at controlled prices, exported to the West, and the hard currency thus obtained was invested in industry. Farmers have been deprived of the necessary means of production for many years. At present, with a fairly good harvest for the past two years, they are reluctant to sell their produce to the state because the money they obtain has minimal purchasing power. As one Polish economist put it: " Grain has become the hard currency."

Indeed it is not only the farmers who find it difficult to spend the money earned. Although prices in Poland are constantly rising, there is a surplus of money as food and other consumer goods are scarce. Empty shelves in shops, shortages of all kinds, have become a sign of inflation—socialist style. At the same time more and more people find themselves on the verge of real poverty. Diminishing deliveries of food to the market, declining industrial production, lack of incentive to work more efficiently—all these factors create enormous pressures in the lives of ordinary people. Young married couples have to wait more than 10 years to get a flat. Low wage earners find it difficult to buy even their allocated food rations. The three-year plan envisages an increase in prices by 25 per cent on average this year, and by 10 per cent in 1985. In 1982 a Polish worker had to work 8,148 hours in order to buy a small car, while a Japanese worker had to work 277 hours for the same

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goal. And yet two years ago expectations were still high for a better life in Poland, and when Lech Walesa said that Poland should try to become another Japan, people believed him and were ready to work harder. Do they believe Jaruzelski when he says that closer cooperation with the Soviet Union will bring about a better future?

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Are Flowers Socialist?

Daniel Passent

POLAND is one of the dirtiest countries in Europe. Once again, the representatives of so-called patriotic and progressive circles will attack me for slandering Poland in general and People's Poland in particular (when Poland was capitalist I did not write that this plaything in the hands of the great powers was dirty, and that meant I liked it, etc.). But let them first have a good look at our public places, at the lavatories in offices, schools, hospitals and factories, where workers relieve themselves using bits of torn newspaper. Let them look at the buffets and so-called canteens at the stations, in all those places where workers have to force themselves to eat a badly served roll with a badly cut piece of cheese. Let them look at the public conveniences in a country where every second toilet seat is watched by a lavatory attendant who rations toilet paper, or just newspaper, and should in fact be renting out gas masks and galoshes. Let them smell the aroma of the milk-bars and factory canteens and, closing their eyes, let them use their limited imagination to re-create the picture of a real grocery shop, with shop assistants in clean white overalls, the air sweet with the smell of freshly baked rolls, nicely packed, and then let them open their eyes again to see life, grey as the hospital linen and the railway seat covers.

There are two theories which try to explain the dirt in Poland: the historical and the contemporary, or the genetic and the functionalist. According to the historical theory, Poland was never famous for its cleanliness. This is the same school that talks about the *Polnische Wirtschaft* and attributes to our nation certain failings in the same way as certain other traits—dishonesty, stinginess, arrogance, militarism, egoism, etc.—are attributed to other nations. This is an old idea. In the nineteenth century it was already possible to read that " knightly laziness " was rooted in the " Polish nature." The historical-genetic school tends to explain our dirt by our history and to justify it by our historical misfortunes. According to this reasoning, our lavatories smell repulsive and our shops are an eyesore because two world wars have rolled through our land, because we had no state of our own for over a century, and because we had, and still have, more important things hanging over our heads. That is why our heads are dirty.

According to the second school, based on contemporary functionalist thought and the evolution of economic mechanisms, our dirt is the result of economic inefficiency, and this has a broader basis. For a while it was explained by the shortage of soap and soap-flakes, but these are now fully available again and dirt is everywhere, just as before. Talk to any doctor and he will tell you all about his problems with washing hospital clothes and linen, not to mention the vile odour of doctors' surgeries.

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Andrzej Wasilewski, a well-known activist on the literary front, subscribed to the functionalist theory. He once published an article about the role of trade in our cultural regression: about all those commodities which are never wrapped, or only badly (and then as a favour) with paper the colour of old rags; about all those tiles fixed on the walls so crookedly that they look as though a drunken bricklayer had laid them; about the cooling systems in shop counters which leak so that water trickles down the counters and mixes with the snow brought in on customers' boots, making puddles of mud that are not mopped up until the next day; about the shop assistants, abrasive and rough as their wrapping paper. There are many reasons for all this, but there is scarcely any doubt that if trade and industry were to polish their products and improve their showrooms and shop-windows, it would raise the level of material civilization itself.

THE gap between Poland and other countries is already enormous in this respect and is growing. In Tokyo—a metropolitan area of over 10 million people, of whom, as I found, the majority are workers—the underground seats are covered with synthetic velvet in ivory, creamy-grey and other elegant colours. These trains are used by workers, and at peak hours they are so crowded that the management employs special bouncers to push people into the trains so that the automatic doors are able to close. This is the way that transport functions in an Asiatic mass society, which has produced neither a Copernicus nor a Chopin, and on whose heads two atomic bombs have dropped. For those in a hurry and who have the money, there are 40,000 taxis. In all of them there are WHITE seat and head-rest covers, the latter often made of lace, which are washed so frequently that they retain their whiteness, just like the taxi-drivers' gloves. Yes, yes, Japanese taxi-drivers wear white gloves when they drive their cabs. They work as hard as everyone else, but they do it in white gloves: they open the door (with a special lever) for passengers, and check the passenger's fare—all in white gloves. . . .

ALL these seditious thoughts about cleanliness and organization came into my cynical and nihilistic head in connexion with the problem of flowers. When it became indecently expensive to buy flowers, the over-zealous defenders of consumer interests began to call for a boycott, and instead of pondering over why flowers were getting more expensive, they found the root of the malady in the avaricious nature of the flower-sellers.

Yet the flower-sellers' wolfish nature is not exactly a secret. Free markets in general are subject to wolfish laws, to one in particular: get as high a price as possible for your product. One would have to be very naïve to pretend that flower-sellers are different in this respect from the other 35 million Poles (including workers), and from state industry which squeezes the market to an ever greater extent. In this debate,

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nonsense is piled upon nonsense; only Professor Szczepan Pienazek (in *Zycie Warszawy*) brought some common sense to it (and really, common sense is all that is needed).

SZYMON KOBYLIŃSKI
— Wolno wam, gospodarzu, żywić przekonanie o nieopłacalności dostaw, ale musicie temu zaprzeczyć swoją działalnością!

Polityka (Warsaw), 11 Dec. 1982

" My good man, you are entitled to the opinion that agricultural deliveries to the state are unprofitable, but you must demonstrate through your labour that this opinion is wrong."

First of all, in our country, miserable and dirty as it is, flowers were one of the few elements of beauty and poetry, just as the fruit and vegetable barrows among the empty shops are elements of relief. One of the reasons for this was that bureaucratic interference in these matters was limited to a necessary minimum: the control of building regulations for greenhouses, the collection of taxes, control of the competition between the private sector and the big, modern state farms, and between the two sectors in their export endeavours. The market regulated the prices.

For making this statement, I will be excommunicated by the pseudo-idealists, for whom, as Professor Lagowski correctly wrote, ideals were more important than interests— this may be a compliment to a philosopher, according to him, but it is an insult to an economist. However, a worker, both as an individual and as a member of his class,

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has his needs and interests before everything else, and in his economic life he is guided by them.

Now we learn that greenhouse owners who grow flowers pay higher taxes than those who use their greenhouses to produce vegetables. They also face difficulties in getting supplies of coal in a country where coal lies around in heaps everywhere. Every student of economics knows that capital's rate of profit tends to even out; that, for instance, if a car or a greenhouse is the capital, the owner should be allowed to use it in the most economical way. The person who finds a way, for instance by renting out his car as a hearse, will earn the most until his competitors do the same, so that eventually there are more hearses than funerals and drivers then switch to driving taxis, and drive them until such time as the payment for carrying living bodies falls below that for carrying dead ones, and so on *ad infinitum*. The same mechanism should be applicable in horticulture. If we want to hit the flower-sellers in the name of class equality, let us do it by all means, but in such a way as to be beneficial to the consumer. If growing flowers is so profitable, let the large state farms make use of the economies of scale, let them lower the price of flowers by having lower production costs and thus eliminate private flower-growers altogether.

How did this idea of hitting the flower-sellers arise in the first place? Was it because the relevant official in the Ministry of Trade decided that flowers are a greater luxury than, say, parsnips, or because of a generally unfavourable attitude towards the well-off, the owners of greenhouses, and similar crooks and bloodsuckers who do not work, but hire others to work for them (which is true)? With each crisis in the Polish People's Republic, the people's anger turns on these cancerous growths in the—otherwise healthy?—economy. As long as the stem is ideologically sound the bloom is unimportant. It is therefore necessary to bury the flower-growers as quickly as possible, in the name of honesty, justice and the purity of our economic model. And let them take their flowers with them to the grave.

But what will our children put on our graves?

Polityka (Warsaw), 19 March 1983

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Universities under Martial Law

Michal Z. Kolodziej

THE rigours of martial law have occasioned an understandable degree of frustration within society chiefly because the democratic achievements of an independent union have been nullified. Understandably, the degree of frustration varied in different circles. Moreover, the process of acclimatization to the new conditions has not been uniform. In general, the most violent protests occurred amongst workers. In many work-places spontaneous strike action was begun only a few hours after the announcement of martial law (although there were plenty of factories where local members of Solidarity had, with greater foresight, prepared the necessary instructions for workers concerning the organization of protest action). The main motivation for this action was to protest against the arrest or internment of leaders of the trade-union movement. These strikes were rapidly and brutally crushed by the authorities.

Reactions in academic circles were varied. It is worth remembering that not only higher educational staff, but also students, widely identified themselves with Solidarity's programme, the former through enrolment en masse in an independent union movement, and the latter through the medium of their new organization established with such difficulty—the Independent Students' Association (NZS).

The democratic processes associated with the Solidarity movement provided new, hitherto unattainable opportunities for academic circles: the liberalization of the law on censorship, leading eventually to the publication of a new statute which envisaged the removal of all interference in academic publications by the censor (the fulfilment of this statute was suspended on 13 December 1981); the numerous possibilities for academics to travel abroad to Western Europe, North America and Japan—all these things made it possible to establish unusually fruitful contacts and extremely useful exchanges in both scholarly and technical fields. A hitherto unprecedented revitalization of academia was taking place, especially evident in the humanities. The work undertaken by, for example, academic historians to " correct history," had enormous success not only among students, but also, to no lesser degree, among workers in a number of large enterprises who began to attend lectures by specialists in various fields, in particular in the field of contemporary Polish and European history. They participated vociferously. Specialists in Polish literature introduced or discussed famous works and characters that official anthologies and publications had carefully avoided until recently.

The attitude of students was quite distinctive. The post-August 1980 trials in Poland literally shook up even those young people who had

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previously been largely uninterested and reluctant to participate. The authorities, so obviously hostile and provocatively contemptuous of the students' demands, permitted some limited concessions. These led, in the spring of last year, to the creation and legalization of their own independent students' union, supported by Solidarity with which it had close affinities. Each activity of Solidarity, whether on a national or a local scale, was supported by the NZS, usually by putting up posters or writing slogans on walls. Thus, during the period of nation-wide student strikes (November and December 1981) which were taking place against a background of attempts by the authorities to restrict a socially-inspired draft law on higher education, of student support for the self-styled Rector of the Radom Higher School of Engineering, Professor-Colonel Hebda, and, finally, the ominous events at the Higher School for Officers of the Fire Brigade in Warsaw, students were given financial assistance by Solidarity.

Simultaneously, a feeling that confrontation was inevitable began to infect the academic *milieu*, alienating the professors who had hitherto, in general, been well-disposed towards the students. Witnessing the increasingly radical mood of both the students and the young academics—radicalism, of course, provoked by the authorities—they began to express their criticisms more and more openly. The professors complained less about the content of their grievances, than the form in which they were expressed, which, they argued, unduly interrupted the teaching process. An imminent threat to their position was sensed instinctively, and it was the fear of reprisals that brought about so characteristic a reaction. This spectacle was to confirm the generally low regard of many with respect to Polish scholarship and teaching by professors of higher education. I do not have in mind here the minor spectacle of the disgusting and embarrassing daily appearances of some representatives of the world of learning and culture on television news programmes, initiated by some retired Professor of Zoology from the Central School of Agricultural Economy in Warsaw, who ran out into the street with a box of chocolates and flowers for a patrol of military policemen (one of thousands which just happened to be passing), and gave them a letter of thanks framed in leather.

THE reactions of the academic *milieu* to the illegal seizure of power by General Jaruzelski were not uniform. It is possible to distinguish three definite groups already mentioned in general terms: students, the young academic cadres, and professors. Each group was to take a different stand following 13 December 1981. A skilful attack on students essentially removed this group from the political scene until the beginning of February 1982. Mass arrests in student dormitories, obligatory attendance at didactic lectures and the dispersion of students to their homes, practically deprived them of the opportunity for mass reaction. Of course, there were exceptions, such as the events in Wroclaw

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University or Warsaw University, but these were quashed quickly, albeit bloodily.

Deprived of students, academics now began to search for confirmation of their own inner reactions at joint, informal meetings. However, with few exceptions, the older generation of academics did not participate in these meetings, declining to discuss things with anyone, apparently for fear of the supposedly ubiquitous security informers. This fear was not altogether groundless. Those who expressed their disapproval of the military and police seizure of power, even within the confines of a relatively small and enclosed group, were increasingly frequently arrested or ordered to report to the police—a fact which testifies to the intensive penetration of academic circles by the Security Police (SB).

Despite rumours circulating that academics would be subject to re-selection before the beginning of the new term, there were at this time, i.e. up until the end of January 1982, no mass sackings. The rumours were circulated by the SB with a specific aim. The fear of dismissal was supposed to dampen down the fieriest and force them into submission. There were only certain formal considerations to be dealt with. Rectors who had been democratically elected had no intention of becoming instruments of the secret police apparatus. The principle of self-government in an institution (which had been fictitious when the Rector was completely in the hands of the Party) did not permit the violation of personal decisions by the use of force. Before long the disobedient Rectors began to be removed: the first victim was the Rector of Warsaw University, Professor Henryk Samsonowicz. However, at that time, schools of higher education renewed their activities in support of the present incumbents. Rectors had been subordinate in some respects to the military commissars, who in turn were supposed to announce that the university was ready to receive students, following appropriate preparations. Decisions from " above " were, however, slow to descend. Only after six weeks had elapsed from the time of the posting of timetables, did announcements that studies would soon recommence begin to appear. Agricultural schools were the first to begin, then teacher-training colleges, polytechnics and medical schools eventually followed suit, and finally, last of all, the universities.

Needless to say, the inaugural lecture, on the subject of the necessity of introducing the state of war and the need for peaceful work and study, was supposed to have been delivered by the academic employees in accordance with instructions, and only in the last resort, if no suitable candidate could be found, by a military commissar. This was supposed to convince students that scientific cadres approved the new order of things, and that the students ought to do likewise. Unfortunately, these plans were not fulfilled in many establishments. It is, however, characteristic that non-Party professors were usually called on to perform these actions, while the young academics, amongst whom until recently there were many members of the PUWP (Polish United Workers' Party),

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usually refused fairly unaminously to participate. At this time the Party was in fact undergoing its final demise in higher education. After the events which ended with the criminal shooting of miners in the Wujek coalmine, those students and academics who still carried Party membership cards began to throw them away en masse.

In the meantime, military " guardians " were unceremoniously interfering in the studies that had recommenced. Every academic teacher was obliged to present detailed summaries of lectures and seminars that he had given. Naturally, lessons in the department of humanities and in political science (introduced in 1968) were subjected to the closest scrutiny. Employees who taught these subjects, once faithful to the propaganda of the regime, had with time emancipated themselves, and their interpretation of political events was far removed from what the authorities expected.

The situation was much the same in the departments of modern Polish history, contemporary literature, the history of the state and law, and others. Lectures given by specialists in these fields became subject to detailed analysis of their " political content." In more drastic cases, summonses for interrogation by the People's Militia (MO) were issued, during which time those teachers who did not reply sufficiently cautiously were threatened with judicial sanctions for inciting young people to anti-state activities—punishable by a lengthy prison sentence according to the laws of the military junta. Others were simply observed; however, materials were carefully collected which will probably be of decisive significance during the vacation period when the aforementioned verification of academics takes place.

IT is hard to say what percentage of the teachers—I have in mind here especially those in the field of humanities—came to terms with a specific " account of conscience "; how many responded to the " instinct for self-preservation," and, in view of the latest transformation of our life, abandoned what they knew to be truths, avoiding unsafe topics or presenting them in accordance with the official interpretation. In any event, students watched the behaviour of their teachers very carefully, and often, especially during discussion classes, bravely brought up in discussion any discrepancies which they had observed.

Initially at least, the students' behaviour, despite the expectations of the authorities, was relatively calm. In general they complied with the increased regimentation of their studies. The internment and arrest of many of their friends during the first days of the state of war, and the following few weeks when they were obliged to remain at home under the influence of their parents, usually full of apprehension for the fate of their children, had the effect outlined above, even if only for a short time. However, the bitterness and refusal to accept the new, altogether falsely represented version of reality, began to provoke reflex

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actions of protest and discontent among the students. Unfounded, slanderous accusations which the Party press directed at the NZS, and the ultimate dissolution (not the suspension!) of that organization on 5 January 1982, only added fuel to the fire.

The theory that students were deliberately incited to take more decisive action will no doubt be confirmed one day. From practically the very beginning of the period of martial law, an attack was launched in the mass media against the intelligentsia, especially in the sphere of higher education. It became progressively more hostile. The intelligentsia was accused of deliberately steering the Solidarity movement towards an " extremist " position. " Anti-socialist " views among the students were attributed to the influence of unsuitable academic cadres. The practical evidence for this supposition was manufactured during the incidents of 1 and 3 May in Poland. Knowing about the protest actions inspired by the underground Solidarity movement, the Security Services tried to do everything in their power to show that the unrest was due to the irresponsible pranks of students and schoolchildren, deprived of appropriate supervision. Since last year's May Day celebrations turned out unusually dismally, the military rulers of present-day Poland decided to give the holiday particular significance this year, and used their role in the ceremonies as propaganda to show society's support for the new authorities. Undoubtedly the experience of many years of forcing people to participate in the May Day parade came in useful here. Easily frightened officials participated in relatively large numbers, as did young people, thanks to appropriate pressure being applied to the heads of schools, especially elementary schools. It should be emphasized that on this occasion the academic *milieu* was left in peace, and not one rector of those elected the previous year was on the " Organizing Committee for the May Day Celebrations," as had previously been the practice. Meanwhile, an unexpected, although perhaps not so much personal as symbolic, role in this unusually pathetic festival was played, once again, by certain retired academics. Students, on the other hand, were almost entirely absent from these processions. It was, of course, difficult to single out their much greater involvement in the protest marches arranged by Solidarity along streets agreed upon in advance (for example, in Warsaw's Old Town) at the same time as the official parade. In any case they did not outnumber the many thousands of others who were taking part. Apart from this, the brutal police intervention aimed at peaceful marchers, who in many towns were not even carrying banners, had a surprising effect on the attitude of the detained students, pupils and academics, onto whom, the following day, the regime's press attempted to throw the entire blame for an allegedly provocative incident. Those arrested were frequently badly beaten up before being brought in front of a ruling body no different from Hitler's *Sondergerichte*, which automatically passed sentences of a number of months' imprisonment.

Particularly drastic methods, however, were used on 3 May with

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clearly provocative intent. A year ago, Poles had honoured this day, a double holiday for state and Church, with great ceremony. In so doing they were able to demonstrate society's lack of support for the communist authorities' attempt to abolish this special day as a state holiday. This year, for obvious reasons, the holiday was restricted to the participation in evening prayers at churches—which the police were unable to prohibit. Probably for this reason, the number of worshippers far exceeded the available space in the churches and huge numbers of people had to remain on the streets outside.

However, before the evening masses were even begun, in those communities where there were special academic priests, numerous groups of ZOMO (Riot Police) began to appear, armed with special shields and batons, accompanied by army trucks with water tanks and tear gas. This show of strength aroused the young people. Not only did they continue with the celebration of the 3 May holiday, but they took a particularly active part in it. The authors of police provocation were probably expecting just that reaction. Armed groups of ZOMO attacked the crowds leaving the churches. This scene was repeated in practically all the academic centres of the country. Remembering similar activities during the Second World War, people began to cry out "Gestapo!" and ran off in various directions. This chant was soon taken up by almost everyone, including young people, who were the particular object of the assassins' hunt.

Special crews threw the beaten and often unconscious bodies lying on the streets into prepared cars, taking them to nearby prisons and detention centres. Only those who were critically injured were taken to hospital. That evening in Warsaw, Cracow, Wroclaw, Gdansk, Szczecin, Torun and other cities, real manhunts took place for students, pupils and schoolteachers, as well as academics. Anyone in these categories found on the streets, was automatically arrested.

The following day, Tuesday 4 May, many depleted groups of students of different disciplines waited in vain for their classes to begin. Their teachers and colleagues were awaiting the passing of sentence by the special board.

TODAY it is difficult to foretell the course of events; however, it is certain that among the Polish university students currently enrolled, there exist groups overflowing with a deep hatred for the methods adopted by the military junta, and who will never forget the lessons of 13 December. Undoubtedly, these students will be the heroes of the next "counter-revolution."

May 1982

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Jaruzelski in 1982–3

" EXACTLY one year ago martial law was proclaimed. Some call this ' war.' Yes, it was and is a war for the preservation and continuity of the socialist statehood, for the salvaging of the economy which is teetering on the brink, for making the policy of reforms and renewal irreversible. . . . The Military Council of National Salvation considers that the emerging situation allows for the suspension of martial law . . . the basic harsh measures will cease to operate by the end of the year. Only such rules will temporarily continue to be applicable which directly protect the fundamental interests of the state, bolster the economy and strengthen the personal security of citizens. No restriction will be retained over and above those which are absolutely necessary. And not a single one less. . . . As yet we cannot afford to give up all extraordinary measures. We have not introduced martial law in order to throw away today what has been achieved with such difficulty over the past year through the efforts of millions of Poles. I make no promises. But I will say one thing: we will not allow anarchy any access to Poland."

Trybuna Ludu, 13 Dec. 1982

" There is no reason to overestimate the real possibilities of the opponents of socialism. They cannot turn back the wheels of history. They can only impede and delay the process of normalization and thus postpone the prospect of the abolition of the state of war and its connected decisions and acts.

" The activities of the adversary should not be considered separately from the global strategic plans of imperialism: they are simply an element of the same policy. They press the button in Washington and stones are immediately thrown in Polish streets. . . . It is necessary to say, firmly and openly, that the instigators of disturbances, whether they are aware of it or not, are in fact playing the role of the ' fifth column,' and are acting against the basic interests of Poland."

Trybuna Ludu, 9 May 1983

" We should also adopt an attitude to the results of the work of the Central Committee Commission* for the explanation of the circumstances, facts and causes of social conflicts in the history of the Polish People's Republic . . ."

Opening Speech at the 12th Plenum of the CC of the PUWP, May 1983

* See " The Kubiak Report," in *Poland Under Jaruzelski*, Part I, pp. 87–107.

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The State of War and Normalization

Tomasz Mianowicz

WHEN with one massive blow, on the night of 12–13 December 1981, the security police destroyed the structure of Solidarity, the communist regime had already lost its political primacy: in every sphere of public life, government decisions could be blocked by social opposition.

The Gdansk Agreement of 31 August 1980 was the beginning of the escalation of this open conflict between a Soviet-style totalitarian state and the true aspirations of an oppressed society. During the 15 months of Solidarity, this conflict spread throughout the country, to towns and to different workplaces. The conflict was not expressed in differences discussed by Solidarity leaders and government representatives around the negotiating table, but in hundreds of local strikes, protests and demonstrations—an exceptional phenomenon with no historical precedent in this particular form. Its driving force was people's desire to recover what the system had taken away for 39 years, condemning them to spiritual and material poverty. This conflict was spontaneous and undirected, with Solidarity leaders unable to control the spread of local strikes and protests (the authorities nevertheless accuse Solidarity leaders of consciously provoking anarchy and the deterioration of the economy).

One can question the principles behind the numerous social demands; demands for higher wages and for free Saturdays must be explained in terms of a misunderstanding of the real economic situation of the country—which is hardly surprising given that the statistics much vaunted by the official press have been falsified for years. However, we should also take into consideration the spiritual and psychological reasons for this type of demand. Solidarity, as a massive, impetuous social movement, had no clear plan for coexistence with a Soviet-style regime. In the permanent situation of conflict, where two forces clash head on—the social movement and the almost instinctive self-defence practised by the state apparatus at different levels—this kind of plan could not take shape. Solidarity's " diplomatic " declarations about the observance of " the principles of socialism " and " non-intervention in politics " have hidden the real nature of the conflict. Yet Solidarity also lacked a plan for the overthrow of the regime and the seizure of power.

On 13 December, it became clear that the foundations of the regime, as represented by its forces, were still strong. Solidarity's programme rejected recourse to violence: this is evidently why the Union was not ready for the confrontation with the authorities in which the latter did not hesitate to use brutal methods of repression, which had been in preparation for several months. Before 13 December, Solidarity was a

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movement in which the hopes of the great majority of Polish society were concentrated, and in which considerable reserves of energy, commitment, and determination were contained. However, Solidarity had no theoretical scheme to back up its political activity. Adam Michnik wrote on this subject, saying:

> theoretical reflexion . . . concerning the change of government lagged behind events. Apart from popular formulae, there was almost no political thought. Practice overshadowed theory. It was not the first time in Polish history that this had happened . . .

How can such a state of affairs be explained?

Solidarity was without precedent: a completely new phenomenon in the history of " real socialism." It was not a union, but a movement for the liberty of the whole nation, emerging from a natural need for truth and dignity, and based on a general emotional commitment; but it had no concepts for future change in the political system.

For the average citizen of the Soviet bloc, the word " politics " has a mystical significance. What is called political and what is not depends on the authorities. Several years ago, I overheard two young women talking in a crowded bus in Cracow. " You know," one of them said, " this morning there was no bread in the shops." The other replied " Oh, don't talk to me about that sort of thing, I'm not interested in politics." I am convinced that both these women joined Solidarity after August 1980.

IN Poland in the 1970s, a tiny group of people undertook the difficult task of formulating a serious political or parapolitical programme (depending on whether we restrict our definition of politics to the art of government or just to the struggle for power); let us call it a " dissident conception." For the protection of society against the totalitarian inertia specific to the Soviet bloc, independent civil institutions were created. KOR, constituted after the social unrest of 1976, initiated this notion of the self-organization of society. Its leaders combined knowledge of social and political thought with practical political activity. In the following years, several groups were constituted, either attached to KOR or to its rivals, but all moulded on the same pattern. The idea of independent unions was born in the ranks of KOR militants (the founding committees were constituted in 1978 in Gdansk and Katowice). This movement, frequently called " democratic opposition," brought together some thousands of activists as it developed. The turning-point was reached in 1980. I had the opportunity of gaining information about the historic strike at Gdansk from Jacek Kuron, one of the KOR leaders. No one among us—and there were many of us in Kuron's flat—foresaw the creation of an independent mass movement of workers two weeks later, recognized by the authorities (at least *de jure*). A few weeks later, there were about 10 million members of Solidarity.

However, at that point the dissidents' idea of creating their own committees proved inadequate. They had not foreseen that the

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authorities would recognize the independent organization which would become a force of general social pressure. Nor had the dissidents foreseen the psychological transformation that society would undergo, notably that people would participate once an institutional guarantee making it possible to express their demands was obtained. The concept that had inspired a few thousand people in the beginning was no longer enough to direct Solidarity. It was therefore essential to think up new plans. There were two possibilities:

a) a model of peaceful coexistence with the Soviet-style regime;
(b) a plan concerning the removal of the communists from power.

Solidarity pursued neither plan; it meandered politically—which evidently facilitated the authorities' task.

THREE periods of the " Polish war " can be distinguished. The time from December 1981 to spring 1982 marks the first period. The authorities managed to break up Solidarity's structure and to terrorize the people. This period closes with the creation of the TKK (Temporary Coordinating Commission) in April and the street demonstrations held from May onwards.

During this period, Jaruzelski had two goals: to recreate a " real socialist " state, in other words the re-imposition of a Soviet-style regime, and also to obtain the approval of society (approval but not support—in communist countries the government never has support; in " normal " conditions, society accepts it or acquiesces. Cases of popular support for the leaders are rare: Gomulka in Poland in 1956 and Dubcek in Czechoslovakia in 1968 are exceptions that prove the rule). The lessening of the rigours of the state of war ought to have been the way to obtain this approval, but street demonstrations and protests were the reply. Society's hatred of the authorities was too strong. Jaruzelski's case is special. Previously, workers' revolts had toppled governments (1956, 1970, and also 1976 when—after the widespread workers' demonstrations—Gierek's fall was merely a question of time). The new First Secretary, bolstered by criticism of the recent past and by making various promises, won popular confidence for a short while. Jaruzelski, however, concentrated the maximum amount of power in his own hands and used it to destroy the social gains made by Solidarity—hence the general hostility towards the present government.

In the first period of the " state of war," the authorities tried in vain to win over select leaders of Solidarity and the Church. The second period—the most difficult for the authorities—lasted until the autumn of 1982. Popular resistance increased, headed by underground Solidarity and other clandestine organizations. The Church criticized the regime's policies and made some mistakes, such as making concessions based on unfounded hopes connected with the bait of the Pope's pilgrimage to Poland, which was made conditional on the " good behaviour " of Church and society. Still, neither Solidarity nor the Church managed to work out the foundations of Jaruzelski's policies,

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that is, his categorical refusal to return to the pre-13 December situation.

The tactics adopted by Solidarity were based on the false belief that the authorities would be lost without the support of authentic social representatives. This assumption prompted them to suggest: a return to the negotiating table; " national agreement "; a " return to an atmosphere of confidence " (which had existed neither on 31 Aug. 1980 nor on 12 Dec. 1981, i.e. throughout Solidarity's entire legal life). It was naively believed that the Union would be able to organize a general strike (together with an ill-defined " active defence of workplaces "), and in this way, would be able to make the authorities listen.

Underground activists became entangled in this contradiction: on the one hand, they mobilized popular feeling against the regime (slogans included " Get the hell out, WRON! " and " Jaruzelski, you'll be hung! "). On the other hand, they wanted to seek a compromise with this same regime. The authorities could not implement their programme alone, and only when underground Solidarity revealed its weaknesses could Jaruzelski confidently take the initiative.

The formal dissolution of Solidarity by the Seym of the Polish People's Republic on 8 October 1982 marked the first phase of the third period. The underground leaders, absorbed in the " struggle for a compromise " with the authorities, seemed to believe that this dissolution was unthinkable and were not ready to react to it. The Polish Episcopate " expressed its regrets." November marked the turning-point. Solidarity held to its tactics: in order to force the authorities into an agreement, strikes and " peaceful " street demonstrations were proclaimed in spite of the fact that a confrontation with the police was inevitable. The repetition of these forms of action meant that they lost their impact. On top of this, previous declarations of protest allowed the authorities to counter-attack. The Polish Primate took a critical position towards Solidarity's plans for 10 November. The underground strategy was indeed questionable, but the way in which Primate Glemp expressed his disapproval aroused bitterness in many parts of society.

The beginning of the authorities' autumn offensive was accompanied by its taking over most of the demands voiced by Solidarity: the date of the Pope's visit was fixed; internees were gradually released, Lech Walesa among them; the end of the state of war was declared; and articles on the need for " national agreement " proliferated in the official press. The institutions set up and tightly controlled by the authorities became partners in this " national agreement "—diverse committees of leaders of the Confederation of Independent Poland (KPN—a patriotic-PRON made gestures on behalf of internees and " demanded " the end of the state of war, the policy towards intellectuals in the third phase of the war became more severe, censorship intensified and the tone of official propaganda became even more stringent.

During this strange war, Solidarity could not decide upon its tactics, did not fully appreciate the adversary's intentions, nor find an adequate strategy. Nor could it play its trump cards (such as the general hostility

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towards the regime, or society's need for resistance—in the preceding year, Poland had been the scene of huge demonstrations for the defence of freedom, an exceptional phenomenon in communist countries—or the existence of many clandestine groups and organizations) to its best advantage. The programme of the underground was based on nostalgia for the time when people were relatively free and not oppressed by the communist state. The authorities, conscious of the theoretical disarray of Solidarity, began the process of dismantling it. It proceeded to develop an offensive called " normalization " in official language (an expression that has the most sombre connotations for the citizens of " real " socialist states).

However, this dismantling of Solidarity was not enough for the authorities. To ensure the success of the " normalization " process, it was essential to " behead " the social movement and eliminate those who would have been able to conceive of, and then lead, resistance. The leaders of the Confederation of Independent Poland (KPN—a patriotic-nationalist organization whose popularity had increased during the legal existence of Solidarity) were sentenced. A trial of KOR members was in preparation and, at the same time as the last internees were released, the leaders of Solidarity's former National Council and many of their associates were arrested.

THE strategy of this one-year war had the following features:

a) Destruction of Solidarity's organizational structure.
b) Political battle against underground activity.
c) Campaign of " normalization " when the authorities were in a position to manipulate both Solidarity's directives and the West's demands.
d) Elimination by " legal " means of the leaders considered most dangerous by the regime.

The release of Lech Walesa—apart from its humanitarian aspects—had a political dimension favourable to the authorities: the position of the TKK was weakened, and Walesa, after a year of isolation and now under police surveillance, played a primarily symbolic role. The end of the state of war on 31 December 1982, felt by the West to be " a step in the right direction," is in fact the next phase in Jaruzelski's march towards " normalization." It is rather comical to believe, as some observers do, that there is no more censorship of mail or telephone tapping. When, on 31 December, answering machines were installed which repeated the message " this conversation is monitored," Warsaw citizens noted that " previously they listened in but did not announce it, whereas now they say they listen in, but in fact they don't." This is an example of the reins being tightened under the guise of " normality."

POLAND'S political landscape is changing. The triangle of Government-Church-Society no longer exists. The Church, which

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has always thought of its role as that of mediator, can no longer fulfil this role. On the one hand, the independence of the Church and the Catholic religion provided the emotional and institutional basis for social action. On the other, the Polish Episcopate tried to warn society about the consequences of impulsive explosions of anger, and in its evangelical strategy, although it emphasized the importance of the rights of man and of the nation, it did not directly criticize the foundations of the political regime. The attempt to pursue this strategy after 13 December 1981 was not always successful and frequently facilitated Jaruzelski's manoeuvres.

Society was deprived of its own, authentic organizations through which it could express its needs and demands. Solidarity as we knew it is no more. But a new movement, different because born of a different situation, is coming into existence. Its need for clandestine activity is dictated by the policies of the Polish authorities. As one of the imprisoned dissidents said, this movement is preparing the " long march " down a road full of hidden traps, in the sombre climate of a Poland " normalized " along Soviet lines.

I believe that this movement will get stronger, will create a strategy of hope, will find again the spirit of freedom that has always cost the Poles so much. Its activity, stemming from the same needs that prompted the creation of Solidarity, needs the help of the free world.

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The Institutionalization of Martial Law

ON 31 December 1982 the Council of State of the Polish People's Republic suspended the "state of war" that was declared on 13 December 1981 by General Wojciech Jaruzelski.

The Seym has passed legislation that empowers the Council of State to reimpose state of war decrees at any time.

It is clear that the martial law regime has changed in name only. Almost all the significant restrictions which were imposed one year ago have been codified into the legal statutes of Poland.

On the initiative of the Military Council of National Salvation, the following laws have been adopted by the Seym:

Law on Trade Unions

The new law passed by the Seym bans all previous trade unions, including the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union, Solidarity. New trade unions will be permitted but will have strictly regulated rights and duties.

a) The Voevodship, or local courts, will have absolute powers over the registration of any new trade unions. It has the power to determine whether or not a body which submits an application to register as a trade union is a trade union. At no point in the Law on Trade Unions is there a definition of a trade union itself, thus it is left to the exclusive power of the courts, appointed solely by the communist authorities, to determine the nature of trade unions. In addition, the courts have exclusive powers to approve the statutes of a trade union and to take away its registration at any time.

b) A trade union may be registered with as few as 50 members. It is permitted for only one trade union to be registered at any one industrial enterprise or workplace. Thus, a trade union of only 50 members, approved exclusively by the courts, may represent an enterprise such as the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk which has 10,000 workers.

c) No national or regional trade unions will be allowed until 1984, if at all, by which time the Polish government will have been able to determine whether it is possible to control the activities of the local trade unions.

d) The right to strike is strictly limited to matters concerning work conditions. There are to be no strikes over wage settlements. If workers vote to strike—it is not stipulated whether it is to be by majority or unanimous vote—the trade union must submit the case to an arbitration board for a seven-day period before the strike can take place.

e) The union does not have the right to negotiate wages and the management is not obliged to negotiate at all. A trade union's sphere of

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influence is to be exclusively that of welfare, safety and health, and retirement pensions.

f) There may be no trade unions to represent the following categories of workers: the police, teachers, firemen, any workers involved in the " production of heat or heating materials," anyone involved in the " production or building of oil and gas equipment," anyone working in the judiciary, " anyone employed in militarized units," and anyone working in a " state enterprise that the Ministry of Internal Affairs deems important to national defence or security," among others. Thus, a large majority of Polish workers will not be permitted representation in a trade union.

g) Anyone found violating any provisions of the trade union law is subject to one year's imprisonment, a fine of 50,000 zlotys, and deprivation of his civil rights.

Special Emergency Powers Act

This bill gives special powers to the head of state, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, to militarize industrial enterprises and workers and to subject workers to military discipline, to use powers of indefinite preventive internment on suspicion that the individuals in question may threaten the " security of the state," and to outlaw the distribution, possession, and publication of leaflets and bulletins. The Special Emergency Powers Act institutes many of the martial law decrees used to repress the Polish people the previous year.

Law Against Parasitism

On 25 October, the Polish parliament (Seym) adopted an " anti-parasite " law, common to the Soviet Union and other Soviet bloc countries, which forcibly drafts or punishes unemployed workers. The intention is to repress those who have been dismissed from their jobs for union activity or who are being denied employment for that reason. The adoption of the law had been expected for some time and had been proposed to the Seym in draft form in June. At that time, the Temporary Coordinating Commission of Solidarity issued a formal declaration opposing the adoption of the parasite law. It appeared in the Warsaw underground publication Glos Wolnego Robotnika *(Voice of the Free Worker), No 4, 21 Jun. 1982.*

Concerning the introduction into the Seym of the government's *draft of a law concerning persons who avoid employment*, the Temporary Coordinating Commission of Solidarity declares:

> The supposed purpose of the law concerning persons who avoid employment is the introduction of legal means that will induce all

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able-bodied persons to undertake work, and will make it impossible for the unemployed to live on income from illegal sources.

The contents of the project, however, unequivocally show that it is not the purpose of the authorities to use this law to deal with the negative social phenomenon of a group of people who live without working. This problem can be solved only by a social policy, by improving the system of centres that provide care for alcoholics, by creating protected workplaces for the socially maladjusted. But it cannot be achieved through administrative coercion.

The true aim of this law is to create a legal basis for the continued repression of people dismissed from their jobs for union activity or political opposition, or those who are inconvenient to the management and authorities for other reasons. The impossibility of finding work according to qualifications and professional training will expose these people to the possible application of the provisions of this law against them. The project proposes to establish a register of unemployed persons, then to harass them by obliging the unemployed to report to the authorities every month, and finally to require that they file a declaration detailing the sources of their income. It is also possible to direct unemployed persons to compulsory public service for a two-month period.

" **Paragraph 21.i.** A person who, having been placed on the register of those who stubbornly avoid work, fails to perform the duty of presenting himself, in response to the summons of the administrative organs, in order to produce a statement on his source of income:

is subject to a punishment of one year's imprisonment or a fine;

21.ii. A person who, in defiance of the duty to perform public works, does not show himself at a given time and place, or avoids doing such works without justified cause:

is subject to two years' imprisonment or a fine."

Law of 26 October 1982 " On the Procedure Against People Who Avoid Work,"
Trybuna Ludu, 6–7 Nov. 1982

The proposed law violates the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic, which does not impose a legal duty to work on its citizens. It is also an attempt to circumvent the prohibition of compulsory labour included in the international conventions ratified by Poland. In particular, it violates Article 2 of the ILO Convention No 29 concerning obligatory or compulsory labour, Article 1 of the ILO Convention No 105 concerning abolition of forced labour, Article 8 of the International Covenant on Human and Political Rights, and Article 6 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

The Temporary Coordinating Commission of Solidarity calls on union members to oppose the draft of this law in all public, professional, and private discussions.

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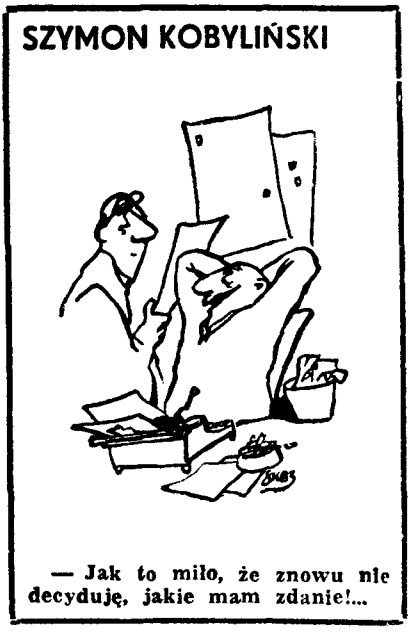
At the same time, the TKK announces that in case this project is made law, it will bring before the ILO and the international trade union movement proposals to condemn the government of the Polish People's Republic for breaking the obligations it has undertaken.

Temporary Coordinating Commission of the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union, Solidarity.

IN addition, the regime has passed a new censorship law that allows total powers of censorship without explanation or reason given by the censor for his decisions; a revision in the criminal code has been passed



Polityka (Warsaw), 2 Apr. 1983
" Isn't it nice that yet again I don't need to decide what my views are! . . ."

that makes the exercise of various human rights a criminal offence and extends prison terms; the regime has issued executive orders that control cultural activities, including acting; and it has passed a law on " Public Order at Institutes of Higher Education " that prevents assembly, free access to information, and association in independent student organizations, among other restrictions.

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War Censorship

" The Censorship Act can without a shadow of doubt be regarded as one of the greatest legislative achievements of our society in the post-August era. Let us not forget that in the Gdansk Agreement the authorities committed themselves to the implementation of the Censorship Act, and its provisions had been discussed with the Consultative Committee of Scientific and Artistic Associations. The Act was a compromise, but compared to the former lawless practices of the censors (revealed in part in 1973 when the famous ' Black Book on Censorship ' was smuggled out to the West by a Cracow censor) the restrictions imposed by the law on the activities of the censor must be seen as an important victory.

" The decree of 12 December 1981 by WRON announced ' a partial suspension ' of the Act. It is impossible to say which part of the Act has been suspended, since the decree refers to the instruction issued by the Director of the Censorship Office. And although the instruction itself is legally binding, it nevertheless remains secret (!)—thus the censors are again free to use even their most outrageous tricks: the confiscation of ' allusive ' poetry (or what they consider to be such), the blackmail of authors and editors."

Solidarity Information Bulletin (published underground in Cracow), No. 44, 24 November 1982

The Blind Leading the Blind

" The blind workers' magazine and the engineers' journal, until now relatively safe havens for the writings of dissident Polish journalists, have been told to stop printing critical articles.

" These specialist journals have been used since the declaration of martial law 14 months ago as vehicles for journalists who were dismissed from official, large-circulation newspapers including Mr Stefan Bratkowski, head of the former journalists' union.

" Even these articles, however, were subject to heavy censorship and it is the censor who has issued the latest instructions. According to Mr Wlodzimierz Kopydlowski, the chairman of the Blind Workers' Co-operative, a letter has been received from the censor complaining about articles which discredit the authorities."

The Times, 25 February 1983

" Mr Wlodzimierz Kopydlowski, chairman of the Blind Workers' Co-operative, said no one was being fired, but ' we must be more careful now and not allow our contributors to use the journal for topics which are of general interest, but not linked to our blind people's union.

"' The times are difficult and we must remain on good terms with the authorities.' "

Daily Telegraph, 25 February 1983

" An official campaign in Poland to remove from specialist magazines journalists who found refuge after the post-martial law purge of the media has faltered in the face of opposition by the Federation of Engineering Associations.

" In a defiant gesture unthinkable before 1980, the governing board of the federation, which represents several score professional associations, asked for clarification of a decision by the party central committee to appoint a journalist from the army daily newspaper to head one of its publications, the *Technical Review*.

" This has held up the appointment which was designed to bring the review under control and weaken the position of Mr Alexander Kopec, a former deputy premier and now the chairman of the federation.

" Recently, the authorities closed down the review's supplement, WIP, an economic newsletter for managers, on the grounds that it threatened the interests of the State."

Financial Times, 25 February 1983

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Why so many New Laws?

The government keeps publishing new draft laws, and parliament keeps voting on them. Society, meanwhile, keeps wondering: who is benefiting? Using the Minister of Justice as a mouthpiece, the government replies that they serve the interests of a stronger socialist democracy.

One of the characteristics of a democratic state is a clear-cut and relatively simple legal system: to protect citizens on the one hand from abuse by those in power and, on the other, from the activities of dishonest citizens. The idea is to defend the interests of the state, where this includes all citizens, and not to defend the interests only of those in power.

In totalitarian states the law serves exclusively to defend the interests of the rulers. Ryszard Kapuscinski once wrote: "Even though dictatorship is contemptuous of the people, the dictators seek the people's approval. Dictatorship, although illegal, or perhaps because it is illegal, takes care to maintain the illusion of legality." The feverish legal creativity of WRON (CROW) seems to support this thesis. The authorities wish to create the illusion that everything they do is in accordance with the law. At the same time, by means of laws of their own creation, they wish to strengthen their own function.

Legalized Lawlessness

The Trade Union Law is a good example of the above. What the authorities did not only do to convince us that this item of legislation is extraordinarily liberal—they consulted with a multitude of people and it has been accepted by the International Labour Organization! In reality, however, the authorities not only de-legalized Solidarity by means of the Law on Trade Unions, but also strengthened the state's control over any future trade unions, making sure that they suit the wishes of the rulers.

An even better example is provided by the decrees of 12 December 1981 concerned with the declaration of war. Both these decrees, however, and the Law on Trade Unions, have been the subject of many comments. . . .

The Chaos of Laws and Regulations

The authorities' law-making activities can be divided broadly into those to do with the economy and those to do with the people. The first category, being extremely complex, requires analysis not only of its legal basis but also in terms of economics. Suffice it to say that as a result of their complexity these rules and regulations contribute to the chaos which characterizes the management of the economy. The Council of Ministers and individual ministers have already issued hundreds of decrees on the basis of these laws. In turn, these lead to the daily creation of new rules and regulations at lower levels. This merry law-making underlies not only a lack of faith in the economic managers (this is quite justified as most managers owe their position to the system of

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nomenklatura), but also stems from a fear of real worker self-management and of market mechanisms.

The State Before the Citizen

The new laws mention, with frightening frequency, the words " in accordance with," " on the basis of " and " following from " the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic. The mandatory " socialist state " is always there too. These occur all over the place: in the Law on Higher Education and in the Law on Solicitors. The phraseology of the civil servant's oath is characteristic: " I shall serve the state and its citizens." The state first—the citizen second. This is fully in accordance with the doctrine that the citizen is but a subservient element of the state, synonymous with those in power.

Legislative Fiction

Our legislator likes to create fiction. With fanfare and drum rolls the Bill on the National Council for Culture was passed, its aim to " unify the activities and ensure the participation of the nation's culture-producing forces in the shaping and fulfilment of cultural policy goals." (Article 1) Among others, this Council is to evaluate the planned expenditure of funds from a special Cultural Development Fund, but the monies are to be at the exclusive disposal of the Minister. (Article 13) More importantly, Article 4, paragraph 2 states: " The Chairman and members of the Council are nominated for a period of three years by the Prime Minister." Here we go again . . . The authorities are to have not only the last, but the only word on such a delicate matter as the development of cultural life in Poland.

The Whip Hand on Teachers

Article 6, paragraph 1 of the Teachers' Charter passed under martial law requires teachers to educate and bring up young people " in the spirit of the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic, a socialist state." Thus, the ideological approach to education has been defined in advance, with no regard for the fact that our society is pluralistic both from the religious point of view and from that of [political] convictions. Moreover, " conduct unbecoming to a teacher, or conduct contrary to that imposed on teachers by Article 6, paragraph 1 " can lead to disciplinary action being taken against the teacher, which includes dismissal from the school. Such matters will be reviewed by a Disciplinary Committee set up by the organs of the state administration. Thus, the authorities have full control over our children's teachers and should find it relatively easy to get rid of the honest and thoughtful educators among them.

When a Minor Breaks the Rules

Other items of the legislation passed after December 1981 can be used as a means of repression against insufficiently pliable citizens who are

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political enemies [of the regime]. The laws on work shirkers and juveniles are especially dangerous. The law on juveniles, widely criticized by educationalists and judges, gives more power to the police. The police now has certain powers which, until recently, were the exclusive reserve of the Juvenile Courts. For example, the law introduces the concept of " infringement of principles of social co-existence"—so imprecise a formulation that the police can intervene on the flimsiest of pretexts. The law requires that action be taken against such infringements and further such infringements be notified to parents, the school, the Courts and the police. The law also provides for the punishment of parents. Their place of work must be informed should the parents have allowed " their child to be demoralized." In this connexion, however, demoralization may be interpreted as any " infringement of principles of social co-existence," including, presumably, political principles. In other words, there is to be collective responsibility. . . .

* * * * *

These are only a few examples of laws passed this year. The authorities' legislative plans are extremely prolific and encompass a Press Law, a Local Council Act, a State Secrets Act, and so on. One thing we know for certain: these new laws will be created in the same spirit as the existing ones.

Tygodnik Mazowsze (published underground in Warsaw), No. 36, 1 Dec. 1982.

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Military Penal Camps

Since November 1982, the Jaruzelski regime has been forcibly conscripting Solidarity members and activists into " military penal camps " under articles of the Penal Army Code. According to information received from Poland there are 22 such camps and the number of inmate-conscripts may be as many as 8,000.

SMUGGLED letters are being received from army bases written by Solidarity members who were conscripted into military service just before 10 November. Their draft cards were often delivered by uniformed and secret police functionaries. Some of those " interned " in the army were previously held in internment camps; some were taken from hospitals. The majority had never before served in the military because of their health.* For example, one " soldier " can move only with the aid of a walking-stick because of deteriorating leg muscles, another has no fingers. People who suffer from stomach ulcers, and therefore refused to eat regular meals, were put under military arrest with the charge that they " lowered the combat ability of the Polish Armed Forces " (this happened in the Czerwony Bor camp).

There are at least 12 penal battalions, each numbering several hundred people, among them Czerwony Bor near Lomza, a base in Wisla near Chelmno, the Unislaw camp, a base near Wroclaw, Czerwony Dwor near Olecko, Wegorzewo, and Bialy Bor near Szczecin.

The following is an excerpt from one smuggled letter that *Tygodnik Mazowsze* received:

" From 8 am until 2.30 pm there is hard labour in water and mud. At around 3 pm we have lunch. Activities start again at 4 pm and last until dusk. Supper is around 7 pm, then compulsory viewing of the news on television, roll-call, and at 9 pm lights out. The ritual is to threaten us with long prison sentences during the roll-call. The officer and NCO cadre, gathered from all over Poland, has been told that we are bandits who may stab them at any time; after only a few days, we look the part.

" On 8 November we were forced to run three miles with full equipment while empty cars drove behind. We staged a hunger strike [to protest] the quality of food, some were taken ill. Members of the secret police had ' talks ' with us.

" The sick bays, and the tents in which we live, are terrible, despite some heating—they are very cold and damp. Medicines and tinned foods are long past the sell-by date, hence there are many cases of food poisoning. The deputy commander of our battalion prevents us from listening to mass on the radio.

" On the evening of 9 November, we put up two crosses for the

* That is, designated medically or physically unfit for military service.

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anniversary of Solidarity. At night we were sent out for guard duty as punishment.

"On 12 November a friend's wife arrived. They wouldn't let her in to see him. . . . Two other families were taken from the base by the police who, following a personal search at the precinct, told them to leave town without seeing their husbands and fathers.

" On 18 November, 200 out of 350 people were ill. Every Friday or Saturday they take us to the baths a few miles away.

" On the 20th a few guys went to the café on the base. They were caught there by the regiment commander who cursed them and ordered them to undress in public. They were punished with an hour of field drills.

" We hung crosses and pictures of the Pope in our tents, which caused another uproar. The cadre took them down.

" 22 November. Following the evening roll-call, during the prayer, the chief-of-staff entered and categorically forbade such practices.

" 24 November. A few of us went to the hospital. When the physician learned that we were from the base he said that he couldn't help any of us get to freedom unless we were to come to him carrying one of our legs in our arms.

" There was a revolt in the sick bay because family visits were denied. We refused to take food and medicines. We won! They took us to the hospital in open trucks. We flashed ' V ' signs and sang the ' *Rota* ' [a popular national song]. We know that we shall win.

" This is not a call-up of reserves. In reality we are interned because they were afraid of what we would do on 10 November. Although many of us were never Union activists, we were interned because we were not afraid to say what we thought. No one has told us when we will get out.

" We will remember the names of the worst, impudent, cynical and stupid officers, and will make them public."

The Interned Reservists

Tygodnik Mazowsze, No. 37, 16 December 1982

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The Balance-Sheet of Persecution

On 17 March, Dr Jerzy Milewski, Chairman of Solidarity's Coordinating Office Abroad, presented heads of delegations to the Madrid European Security Conference with a 600-page document concerning the state of human rights in Poland under martial law. The document itself is 200 pages long, with another 400 pages of witnesses' statements, specific cases, statistics and other documentation. It was prepared on the instructions of the underground Solidarity leadership—the Temporary Coordinating Commission.

What follows is a summary of this document in English, prepared by Solidarity's Coordinating Office Abroad.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

Regarding the monitoring of our country's compliance with the Helsinki agreements and the international conventions concerning human and civil rights as our social duty, we present to you a report describing the extent of lawlessness engaged in by the authorities of the Polish Peoples' Republic.

The report does not bring to light all cases of illegality in Poland. Many have been concealed by the government and the secret police, and much evidence was destroyed. Repression of all independent activity and the persecution of trade union activists makes it difficult to search for, verify, and document all cases of lawlessness. As and when these difficulties are overcome, we shall expand the present report with supplements. In the event of our arrest, work will be continued and successive reports will be signed by persons of recognized social prestige.

We send this report with the conviction that it will serve the cause of peace and security in Europe, for there can be no peace without social justice.

Signed by the following members of the Temporary Coordinating Commission: Zbigniew Bujak (Mazowsze or Warsaw Region), Wladyslaw Hardek (Malopolska or Cracow Region), Bogdan Lis (Gdansk Region), Jozef Pinior (Lower Silesia or Wroclaw Region), Eugeniusz Szumiejko (member of the Presidium of Solidarity's National Commission).
30 Jan. 1983.

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Part I

Chapter 1—Legal, quasi-legal and illegal mechanisms of the abuse of law in Poland (15 pp.)

The report presents in brief the methods of rule over Polish society between 1941 and 1981. It emphasizes extra-legal repression employed by the authorities against the citizens of the Polish People's Republic, and the deliberate obliteration of the boundary between the law and administrative regulations. Even though the Communist Party has secured full control of all levels of power including the parliament, it defends its position by disregarding the differences between legislative, executive and judicial actions. The constitution is not based on the primacy of the natural rights of individuals: therefore, general declarations concerning democracy and legality included in the constitution remain meaningless.

Chapter 2—The imposition of the state of war in the light of domestic and international law (8 pp.)

On 13 December 1981, the authorities imposed a state of war, violating the legal and constitutional order. The authors of the report summarize the most important regulations of the decree of the state of war in 34 points.

The basic rights of citizens, such as the inviolability of persons, freedom of speech and of the press, the right to hold public gatherings and demonstrations, were abolished. Offices and industrial enterprises were militarized, private travel was severely restricted, and a curfew was imposed. The right to strike was suspended. The activity of trade unions and other associations was prohibited. Mail was subject to censorship; telecommunication links were blocked. The list of violations is even longer. All these measures made the Poles feel that they were living in an occupied country.

The introduction of the state of war in Poland violated the following rules of international law:

1. Article 4, paragraph 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights—because no exceptional public danger threatened the existence of the nation, and only such circumstances can justify the imposition of the state of war as a state of emergency.
2. Article 1, point B of ILO Convention No. 105, which states that forced labour may not be used for economic purposes.
3. ILO Conventions Nos. 87 and 98, which guarantee freedom of trade union activities.
4. Article 9, paragraph 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which was violated by the introduction of indefinite internment on the basis of administrative decision.

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Chapter 3—Legislation under the state of war (10 pp.)

1. The trade union law, passed on 8 October 1982 (*1982 Journal of Laws*, 32, item 216) violates the fundamental guarantees provided by ILO Convention No. 87. The real purpose of its enactment was the de-legalization of Solidarity and the creation of trade unions that would be completely dependent on the government.
2. The law on the treatment of persons notoriously avoiding work, passed on 26 October 1982, contravenes ILO Convention No. 29, and point 105 concerning the abolition of forced labour. The deputy Minister of Justice, Maria Regent-Lechowicz, publicly declared: " We are now working on the wording which will not be obviously incompatible with the ratified conventions." The law introduces, among other measures, compulsory registration of unemployed persons, and gives the government the right to force them to work on public projects under the threat of a fine or imprisonment.
3. The law on special regulations following the suspension of the state of war. The report analyses the regulations of this law and concludes that the suspension of the state of war was merely a propaganda manoeuvre. In reality, military service in special army bases was substituted for internment camps—the right to strike was so restricted as to make it non-existent—many categories of employees are still denied the right to change jobs. Summary criminal procedures with no right of appeal, still remain in use. Privacy of correspondence and telephone communications does not exist. Article 12, item 3 of this law introduces a new category of crime into the criminal code: " actions undertaken to cause public disturbance or riots will be punished with up to three years in prison " (Article 282a of the Criminal Code).

The conclusion of this chapter states that the suspension of the state of war is only a new form of the system introduced on 13 December 1981, a system based on the violation of human and civil rights.

Chapter 4—The repressive role of propaganda (5 pp.)

13 December 1981 began an uninhibited attack on all forms of independent social activity by the Party-state media. Individuals and certain groups of citizens are libellously accused of heinous deeds. The regime's propaganda proclaims a theory of an " anti-socialist *putsch* " allegedly prepared by the " enemies of socialism in the KPN (Confederation of Independent Poland) and KOR (Workers' Defence Committee), the extreme wing of Solidarity, and reactionary Church circles." Those attacked have no possibility of defending themselves.

Chapter 5—Public prosecutors and the courts under the state of war (13 pp.)

The decree imposing the state of war introduced, or increased, criminal

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sanctions, preparing a quasi-legal basis for the planned repression. Continuing trade union activity has been subjected to a penalty of three years in prison, printing or distributing leaflets or unofficial publications—a maximum of 19 years. Failure to inform the authorities about such crimes is to be punished by a five-year sentence. Summary proceedings in criminal trials were introduced and frequently utilized, permitting the imposition of the longest possible prison terms or the death sentence, for crimes usually not subject to such penalties. Moreover, the summary proceedings deprive the accused of the right to appeal. The militarization of enterprises furnished the government with additional possibilities. Strikers may be punished for refusing to obey a military order or for desertion. Such acts can bring sentences from two years in prison, up to the death penalty.

The introduction of the state of war marked the beginning of a purge among judges, prosecutors and defence attorneys. Some of them were deprived of the right to practise their profession, others were forced to resign, some were interned. Among about 3,000 judges, 900 belonged to Solidarity. A significant number refused official demands to quit the suspended Union. For a whole year, the regime has been aiming at the complete subordination of judges and prosecutors to administrative instructions. The Minister of Justice, Sylwester Zawadzki, told a gathering of judges on 6 October 1982: " The verdicts must not be looked upon from the point of view of the specialist in criminal law—society is shown that each sentence is a weapon of struggle. Mild sentences are regarded as defiance of the authorities. If an acquittal is interpreted as a sign of weakness—this must be taken into account. A humanitarian approach that disregards reality may lead to greater harm."

Chapter 6—The practice of criminal proceedings, investigations, trials and sentences (42 pp.)

The report analyses in detail the instruments of terror employed by the police, prosecutors, and the courts in the course of investigation, interrogation, and arrest. Special attention is devoted to physical abuse, beatings, and torture by the police. The report cites the names and accounts of numerous victims who were beaten during investigation. Investigations and trials directly instigated by the secret police (SB) are analysed separately. Entirely false accusations were concocted by the secret police, which thus took its revenge on the most defiant persons. There is a comprehensive description of the role of prosecutors as the intermediary between the administration and the courts.

The authors of the report, attempting to estimate the number of prisoners sentenced in political trials during the state of war, quote the figure of 3,500. Persons in preventive detention and awaiting trial, or persons deported to the special military camps, are not included in this

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figure. Official data gives the figure of 3,666 persons arrested between 13 December 1981 and 13 December 1982. The official sources do not, however, include cases which they regard as " criminal," such as attacks on the police, " resisting the police," " insulting a policeman " during a demonstration. The official figure may thus be regarded as a deliberate underestimate.

Chapter 7—Prisons and the status of political prisoners (9 pp.)

While, according to the law in Poland, there are no political prisoners, people arrested under the state of war decree consider themselves as such. This is also a widespread popular feeling. Members of Solidarity arrested after 13 December 1981 were treated as common criminals. The conditions in Polish prisons are regulated by the Ministry of Justice decree No. 11 of 25 January 1974—a decree so harsh that the government has never published it. Prisoners, after being sentenced, are forced to work—the character and conditions of the work clearly indicate that its purpose is repression and not resocialization. The prisoners can send and receive one letter every two months; reduction of food allowance is used as punishment, in violation of international law; living and medical conditions are poor. Many reports from prisons testify to overcrowded conditions. There is little or no opportunity for exercise, and restrictions on religious observance are common.

There are many reports from prisons of beatings, abuse of prisoners, and harassment. The report gives the names of 20 prisons where members of Solidarity were held after being sentenced, and cites examples of mistreatment. The report stresses that prison conditions for women are as bad as those for men. It is estimated that the minimum number of people sentenced under Articles 46 and 48 of the decree of the state of war is at least 1,500.

Chapter 8—Internment camps (10 pp.)

The internment of Solidarity members and activists began at midnight on 13 December 1981. Apartment doors were broken down and people were dragged out without their clothes on. In no known case were the interned people presented with warrants. Who was arrested? Mostly elected union officials, activists, and employees of Solidarity, students, members of Catholic intelligentsia clubs, intellectuals, members of independent groups or organizations like KOR and the KPN. The internees were workers, peasants, and intellectuals representing national, Christian, left-wing and other political currents. Conditions in most places of internment were poor, with the exception of special camps which were shown to journalists. In many instances the Church had only limited access to the internees. The report lists many instances in which treatment of internees flagrantly violated the Geneva Convention. Names and dates are given for internment camps where uniformed police and prison guards used force and physically abused the internees, leading to serious injuries and the hospitalization of dozens of people.

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Chapter 9—Police and military action during strikes and street demonstrations (30 pp.)

After the imposition of the state of war, there was a wave of strikes throughout Poland, broken with tremendous force and brutality. Tanks, water-cannon, clubs, tear gas, grenades, beating with clubs and sticks, kicking and trampling, were widespread. These facts are well documented in the report, although some dates and incidents will never be known since the hospitals—in order to protect the victims—did not keep files of the wounded.

After December 1981, Solidarity did not call many street demonstrations, but nevertheless some took place spontaneously. ZOMO and the army used indiscriminate force and brutality unwarranted by the peaceful character of the street demonstrations. The report lists names of people killed and severely wounded, and provides many accounts of the sentencing of thousands to short prison terms (three months) regardless of proof of participation in the demonstrations. There were many accounts proving that the arrests and beatings were often directed against passers-by, nurses, doctors, teenagers. In at least four documented instances, the police used firearms against unarmed and peaceful demonstrators, killing people in Gdansk, Wroclaw, Lublin, and Nowa Huta. People arrested during and after street demonstrations were brutally beaten. Their families were not notified of their arrest. The highest known sentence for participating in a street demonstration was four years.

Chapter 10—Actions against workers and other employees (19 pp.)

In order to understand the range of repressive measures open to the Polish government one has to know that only 1·69 per cent of the work-force in Poland (outside agriculture) is not employed by the state. Firing people from work, employing them in positions below their qualifications, wage discrimination and denial of promotions have been widely used in Poland as instruments of repression.

The introduction of the state of war meant, among other things, the militarization of many factories and enterprises. In many instances, people who were not interned were fired for their previous activities in Solidarity or for participating in strikes and protest actions. The report quotes accounts of the firing of almost 3,000 people at the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk and in many other enterprises. It also gives examples of people fired from work for symbolic actions like wearing a Solidarity badge. The government is using secret police at the workplace to gather information, intimidate workers and recruit informers. In 1982, many regulations were intended to force the management to fulfil the role of the police.

Chapter 11—Repression against journalists (5 pp.)

In this chapter, documentation is given showing that 10 per cent of

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journalists have been fired from their jobs while 20 per cent have been punished in other ways. The mass media and journalists working for Solidarity were special targets of repression.

Chapter 12—Education and the youth (12 pp.)

Repression against society did not spare school and college students and teachers. Almost all the democratically elected university rectors were fired in 1982. At many universities, the verification of personnel (and the frequent unwillingness of employees to answer questions) resulted in mass dismissals. For example, 200 teachers were fired at the Silesian Polytechnic Institute. Among the killed and the severely wounded, one finds teenagers and even children. Although teachers are resisting the government's pressure, new regulations attempt to institutionalize repression against students and schoolchildren.

Part II

The second part of the report is an appendix 407 pages long, of documents that illustrate the theses of the main text. The appendix comprises three sections:

1. Official documents: official charges against members of Solidarity, verdicts, protocol of searches, decisions of misdemeanour courts, decisions regarding internment, appeals, complaints, official decrees, and regulations.
2. Lists of people arrested, detained, and interned during the state of war: one finds here a list of 1,498 people sentenced after 13 December 1981 to prison terms for Union activities. The authors of the report state that this list is far from complete.
3. Eyewitness testimonies: participants in strikes and demonstrations, accounts by victims beaten up on the streets and in prisons, participants in trials, letters from prisons.

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Ten Years for Union Activity: Letter from a Political Prisoner

Mrs Ewa Kubasiewicz received the longest sentence to date for "continuing illegal trade union activity under martial law." Consequently—in theory anyway—she is free to apply for amnesty on the basis of official proposals regarding "political prisoners." In spite of numerous pleas, including those of the Church, there has been no general amnesty: prisoners, their families or their "work collectives," have to ask for it individually. Amnesty might be granted, if they have shown repentance and if their behaviour indicates that they will keep to the straight and narrow.

The following is a translation of an open letter by Mrs Kubasiewicz, smuggled out of Fordon prison.

An Open Letter to My Friends

On 14 December 1982, the Chairman of the Council of State put forward proposals regarding political prisoners to the Seym. I would like to make my own position known concerning this matter. I was arrested on 20 December 1981. For a year now, I have experienced prison life and I feel qualified to say that the removal of freedom is more than just putting an individual in isolation, confining him to a penal institution and subjecting him to all manner of physical and mental degradation. A prisoner is nothing but an object, with whom no one need, or indeed should, be concerned. He is therefore compelled to submit to a whole range of humiliations. I do not have the status of a political prisoner and nor do my colleagues. I am nothing but a common criminal. The President made no mention of the fact that political prisoners have the right to a different status, although on the 20th and 21st day of each month we remind the authorities of this by organizing hunger strikes. Instead, the President suggested something else: an act of pardon. The shameful nature of such a proposition can probably be fully understood only by those who, like myself, have had to stand a trial that was only a legal farce and had nothing to do with justice, and by those who have experienced police custody and imprisonment. Over the past year, I have been struggling with myself, trying not to give in to feelings of hatred, despite all that has happened to me, only to learn quite suddenly that it is I—sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment, deprived of civil rights for five years and whose son has received a three-year sentence for the sole reason that I am his mother—who am now supposed to beg forgiveness and clemency and to show contrition. The President did not mention for what or from whom I should seek this forgiveness. Perhaps from the prosecutor or from the security policeman who falsified the investigation records? I also ask this question of General Jaruzelski, who called for

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repentance in front of television cameras on 13 December 1981. Who should repent? Me?

I think that it is important that now that these suggestions have been put forward, my friends (to whom I would like to express my gratitude for their efforts to secure my release) should know my attitude concerning this matter. Release—yes! At any price—no!

Ewa Kubasiewicz
December 1982, Fordon

The following are fragments from a private correspondence from Fordon Prison on the acts of repression against Ewa Kubasiewicz as a result of her open letter from prison in January.

". . . Ewa was refused any visits for three months. She was not allowed to receive any correspondence. She has been deprived of her weekly ration which means that she cannot buy food from the prison canteen. Nor is she allowed to watch television. All communication between her cell and the other cells has been cut off. She and the other ' political women ' are often put into the ' *kabaryana*,' a cell equipped with nothing but a stool fixed to the floor and a board folded against the wall during the day, which serves as a bed at night.

" They are usually held in this cell with a ' criminal,' who, encouraged by the guards, is used to bully the politicals. It is not improbable that while she is in such strict isolation, the guards may beat her as an act of vengeance for her free voice ' from behind the bars' . . ."

Committee in Support of Solidarity REPORTS
(New York), 5 April 1983

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A Day in the Underground

The underground resistance movement depends on thousands of activists to deliver paper for publishing bulletins, to operate printing presses, for deliveries, information gathering, and countless other tasks, all activities risking arrest and up to 10 years' imprisonment. Solidarnosc Walczaca *(Fighting Solidarity) printed an account, which appears below, of an underground Solidarity activist's day, performing the difficult tasks of the resistance movement.*

TOMORROW my three-day sick-leave will be up. And again I'll be killing time in the office, counting the hours until the end of the working day. Today I absolutely have to deliver paper to the friendly printers, collect the plates from illegal purchase, brief the guy willing to start a drop-off point at his flat, and in the afternoon get in touch with the editors of *Solidarnosc Walczaca* (Fighting Solidarity) with news that has been received for them and has accumulated in the meantime.

At 7:40 I get on the train and go to pick up my car from the service station; it started to make wheezing sounds yesterday and is absolutely indispensable today. A " small " sum of 5,000 zlotys for replacing a wheel disc in the gearbox and here I am at the filling station. Ten litres of petrol.

Driving on Powstania Slyskie Street, from time to time I check the rear-view mirror. It's better to be careful. (Fortunately nobody follows me.) The street behind me is empty.

A new city district, a big block of flats. I stop slightly further down the street. Grabbing two bags, I dive into the cellar. I know the passage by heart: three staircases to the left; then a right turn, second doorway. The padlock gets stuck, it's still dark and I don't want to switch the light on. The storehouse is emptying. A week ago there were 35 packets of paper, I begin to load 14, choosing the untorn ones. What is left is very poor quality typing paper. Xerox paper would have been much better. Have to ask Wojtek. Perhaps he's got some left at some other place. Wojtek, theoretically, is responsible for supplying the printing house. In fact he does everything: establishes drop-off points, distributes leaflets, delivers mail, and if need be, does the printing himself. He should have some paper.

The padlock is locked, the bags full—but someone is coming down the stairs. I shouldn't have put the light on. I pretend to be one of the lodgers taking things from my own cellar. I pass by an elderly man and almost fly up the stairs fearing that in a second either my arms or the bags' handles will give out. But here I am through the door and back in the car. Nonchalantly I drop the bags on the back seat. The car responds with a groan.

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I catch my breath for a while, start briskly, and in a quarter of an hour I stop 100 yards from the drop-off point established by the printers. I leave the car around the corner. House No. 43, everything okay. I ring the bell in a code. An elderly woman opens the door. " Is Mr. Piotrowski at home? It concerns sanding the house," I start the coded message.

" I don't know anything. My son-in-law will be home tomorrow night." And the frightened mother-in-law slams the door in my face.

I mumble a few swear words—again the families don't know the code. This Piotrowski has to be bawled out. What do I do now? I can't possibly drive all over the city with all this paper until Piotrowski teaches his mother-in-law the code. I decide to drive straight to the printing house, in spite of the warning not to go there for fear of being discovered. But the only choice I have is to take the paper back to the cellar or risk delivering it to the printers and getting rid of the tricky load.

I reach Lwowska Street. Second floor. I ring the bell. The door is opened by a guy whom I don't remember meeting before. I ask about Adam—there is no code here. The guy—playing dumb—suggests that I must have the wrong address. " Perhaps Adam has left something for me?" I'm making another attempt. At the half-opened door down the hall the well-known, unkempt head of Turek appears. " Hi Turek! " I say above the arm of the distracted " doorman."

" Come in and close the door," is Turek's welcome. The ink already stinks in the hall. Turek, in ink-stained overalls, introduces me to his co-printer: this is Dlugi, Adam's brother. They are printing last week's issue of *Solidarnosc Walczaca*. The plates reached him late since his connexion had to leave town to attend a funeral. On top of this, Adam has been invaded by the extended family who are afraid of so much as even looking at the underground. All in all, a four-day delay. Pick-up points are getting cross because the distributors keep calling several times in vain, claiming they are risking their lives.

I run to the car to fetch the bags. " Thank God you brought them here. This Piotrowski brings the supplies very sporadically," the printers complain. " Last week Dlugi himself snatched three packets of paper from his workplace and saved us. The supply will last us three weeks."

I want to leave but the printers give me information for the editors. I tell them to write it down since I am unable to remember all the details: who denounced whom, the particulars of the interrogation by the secret police, requests and suggestions concerning future publications.

I point out fingerprints to them on some copies of *Solidarnosc Walczaca*. " Our gloves are in shreds. Does that mean we have to stop printing? " retorts Dlugi, irritated by my remark. "We're not showered with gloves through the press distribution. On the other hand, when the issue is not on time, we are the ones who get all the blame! " I don't argue with him, knowing full well that he is right.

I collect what they've written down and rush to the car. I was supposed to pick up the matrices at 9.30, and it's already 10.00. We'll have to

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make another appointment. Now to see the guy who offered his flat as a pick-up point. At 10.20, I knock on the door of the flat—the bell doesn't work. It's only after several minutes of banging at the door that it's opened by a bespectacled elderly man. " Good morning, this is concerning your ad about a washing machine."

The old man scrutinizes my face. " Do come in, but you know, there is no guarantee." Following this friendly exchange, I enter the flat. The host puts the kettle on and I know that I won't be able to leave in half an hour. I begin in a business-like tone: " You've made a tentative offer for a drop-off point. The days in question are Tuesdays or Thursdays at 5 pm. The supplier may use the former code. All we have to do is to establish a code for the receiving party, also it would be advisable to have some kind of a warning signal, and the doorbell will have to be fixed."

" Just a second, sir," the gentleman interrupts me. " What kind of papers are these going to be?"

That's all we need—censorship at the drop-off point. I tell him, " Independence, the free thought of the self-governing Republic. But you are not a communist, by any chance? " I ask jokingly.

" God forbid, no! " my host protests. " But tell me, what amount do you have in mind? "

" About 500 copies a week."

" Well," the old man, obviously very frightened, begins to elaborate, " 50, one can hide 50, but 500 is dangerous."

I begin to explain that in our work we cannot operate in terms of 50 copies. " You won't even be able to account for 10 copies. The risk is there all the time and one has to be prepared even for galleys. Of course, you have the last word," I end demagogically. My interlocutor begins the story of his Home Army company during the Second World War and then adds that youth lacks physical resistance, and finally agrees to open the drop-off point the following week. I suggest that he prepares a short security instruction and we part company exchanging meaningful wishes.

Off I run to the meeting place of the editorial board of *Solidarnosc Walczaca*. I stop for a while at Grunwald Square to grab a bite. Knockwurst with bread at a standing bar, but by the window—I see a strange car. Two aerials of varying lengths, regular registration No. WRA 2571, parked with its back to the pavement, in a most unusual manner, with two youths inside. I make up a quick alibi: what do I have on and with me, where have I been today, whom have I seen, where have I parked my car . . . then I notice a guy idiotically sitting on a bench, ostentatiously bored and freezing to death. There is also the familiar face of a secret agent who tried to stop me in August 1980 in front of the depot. He approaches the one seated on the bench, leans over him and says something. A minute later they both get into an innocent-looking Fiat parked on the other side of the street. It's obvious that they are encircling one of the 13-storey buildings. Who's being chased, I wonder, already calmer, realizing that I am safe. Headquarters has to be warned . . .

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On the way to my car I run into Bolek, the delivery boy of the second edition. Since we work together, I don't have to make up any stories. " Look," Bolek says, " I have two electronic engineers who are eager to build a radio transmitter. All they need are blueprints and a transistor. They'll work for 100 copies a week. Will you handle it? "

" If they are going around buying transistors and distributing the paper, they'll be caught in three weeks' time. Besides, you can provide them with the paper yourself, just increase your own order." That cools him down.

" I haven't had any paper in two weeks. People are getting impatient. We're losing readers. It must not be like that," Bolek charges.

" Okay, but what was it when you left for four days last month without any warning? " I ask in turn. " The guy was at your place five times in two days, and it was a miracle that he didn't get caught—he was being checked for his identity documents outside your house with all the newspapers on him." I try to calm him down some more. He eventually calms down and promises he will get those electronic specialists started himself.

At the same time I learn that Bolek has some ink at his house. He gets into my car and we drive to Grabiszynek. At home, he opens out the sofa and takes out two jars with twist-off caps. " Christ!" I exclaim. " Store it in a cupboard, not in a sofa. It looks more like jam than bed linen." He agrees with me and mentions the possibility of the purchase of 200 packets of paper. " Where and when? " I ask.

" It has to be picked up in three days, otherwise the chance will be missed."

I sigh. I won't be able to arrange transport and storage at such short notice. I leave the matter to Bolek, say goodbye and run on to do further errands.

Wieczarek Street. I check the number again and ring the bell. " Does Mr. Rogachin live here? "

" A year ago and on another floor, but do come in, I'll give you his new address," the dark-eyed woman in a dressing-gown utters the code with a sign. " We won't talk here," and she invites me inside with a gesture. I stumble over the doormat and, walking in, begin to relate the information I was to pass on to the editorial board.

Inside, a big surprise: on the carpet, chewing a match, sits Korud Moramechi himself. Next to him—a pile of papers, leaflets and newspapers, and a typewriter. Starzek, the co-editor, is also there. I am pleasantly surprised, say hello, and think that it's an excellent chance to tell them about the problems with distribution. " Wherever I go, I'm being told off for late delivery of *Solidarnosc Walczaca*," I begin to complain.

" Cut the shit," Korud interrupts me, " and write an article, a good one. Write and tell them that *Solidarnosc Walczaca* is not an idiomatic synonym for cultural symbols of punctuality."

Solidarnosc Walczaca, No. 28

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An Independent Society

Dawid Warszawski

"WE are the state," was a phrase I used in an article which appeared in *KOS* over six months ago. I wanted to underline the fact that although the politics of the present regime goes against the national interest, this does not relieve us of our responsibility towards the present and the future of Poland; we cannot limit our activities simply to tactics of self-defence—as was the case in the past when the country was governed by foreign forces of occupation. Even in today's extreme and hostile conditions, we must form our own independent institutions and organizations which will serve the general aims and needs of society. These structures, at least internally, would be an alternative to their existing counterparts which, within the formal structure of the state, not only do not realize the goals of society, but also aim to deny those very goals. Thus, if the present educational system feeds its pupils a false picture of reality instead of bringing them real knowledge about their country's past and present, an independent system should be created in which true knowledge can be imparted. If the legal system rewards activities that are socially harmful and punishes those that are for the social good, then we should form a citizens' court which would judge the perpetrators of such activities. Examples such as these abound.

The contradictions in this idea, however, are shown up by these two examples alone. If, theoretically, one could imagine an independent educational system which would reach a majority of schoolchildren and successfully counteract the negative effects of education in state schools (classes held underground during the German occupation came close to this ideal, although not as a result of indoctrination by the state so much as a result of the state ban on education), then citizens' courts could only punish the perpetrators, they could not free the victims. There are certain functions of the state—especially the use of repressive measures—which society simply could not imitate; the idea of an underground state would only become realistic in the event of a diarchy, i.e. government by two independent authorities. This could only happen if one of those authorities is forced upon the nation from outside, or if there is civil war; if, however, a government machine wages war on the society from which it itself has emerged, then the creation of a second, alternative government machine is quite impossible.

Thus the idea of creating an underground state in Poland today must be rejected as unrealistic: a government machine can go underground but it cannot be created there. This does not mean that the thesis of the article I mentioned earlier is erroneous; it was merely wrongly labelled. One has only to look around to see that alternatives to the present educational system, the press, publishing, social and professional

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organizations, do all exist and function on an independent level. However, the sum of all these activities does not add up to an underground state, but rather to something known as an underground society, although I consider this an ill-chosen label. If an underground state conspires in secret against a lawful government, the same cannot be true of an " underground " society, which is one and the same as the " legal " society. I thus propose the name " independent society." This is not just a question of semantics, as I shall endeavour to show.

INDEPENDENCE means deciding and acting in circumstances which allow for freedom of choice. In this sense the term " independent " fully conveys the basic characteristic of all social activities which are outside the monopoly of the state. Similarly, if we apply this criterion to they way in which the state system functions in Poland, we come to the obvious conclusion that the country is not independent. We are thus dealing with an independent society, or rather a society whose aim is independence, but which has been denied an independent state. The evidence of history, as well as of the present political scene, shows a conflicting picture: independent states can govern oppressed societies. This characterizes all totalitarian regimes, such as that of Hitler in the past and the Soviet system of today. Such a system can only be changed by outside intervention (for example, the catastrophe of war-time Nazi Germany) or when a subjugated society fights for its independence (Franco's Spain).

Let us return to the situation in Poland. It is inconceivable, in the present circumstances, that our state will ever achieve independence since there are no signs of the approaching downfall of the Soviet system, which alone could make this possible. Moreover, as I have already pointed out, this would not necessarily give birth to an independent society. Therefore, hopes for the dawning of the Great Day must be put aside and left to the future. Does this mean that we must treat the present as " historical manure " which only fertilizes the soil so that one day our children can reap the benefits? The question is a pertinent one, especially today when all hope of a speedy victory seems buried, and when dozens of people are suffering repressions because they stood up for society's demands.

I believe that such an attitude is fundamentally wrong. The most basic quality of an independent society is that it allows its members—and potentially that includes us all—the freedom to think and hold opinions without constraint, the opportunity to take immediate action without having to wait for a turning-point in order to realize the aspirations and aims of society. Moreover, without taking action, such a turning-point will surely never come about; only an independent society can win independence for its government. The organization of free education, a free press and free institutions, helps to build our independence and lays the foundations for an independent state in the future; it is thus an aim in itself, as well as a means of reaching the subsequent end. This leads us to

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one very important conclusion: the building of an independent society must not become a bargaining point which society—or someone acting on its behalf—can offer in exchange for this or that concession. Leaving aside the fact that it is not worth dealing with a power which only honours agreements when under pressure, sacrificing the independent life of society would be equal to the self-destruction of that society which allowed its independence to be sacrificed. This is something which, even given an independent state, is very difficult to recover.

A DIFFICULT and dangerous period lies ahead. As far as the future is concerned, one thing seems plain—society must never give up its independence, even at the cost of forfeiting a marked liberalization in the life of society controlled by the state. The process of liberalization would be retracted the moment that society lost its ability to reorganize, as has already happened on a number of occasions in our most recent history. The opposite is also true—a movement where society begins to organize itself, even on a small scale, can lead to a mass movement; we saw this happen as recently as August 1980. We must therefore work towards achieving an independent society, but not in order to be in a strong bargaining position with the authorities—only in order that we may lead dignified lives now. Dignity cannot be negotiated, it can only be attained through hard work.

KOS Bulletin (published underground), No. 21/22.

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At the Crossroads

THE ruling team finds itself in a predicament and it refuses to admit it, even to itself. The scale of the demonstrations on 31 August was such, and the moral support for the protest action so widespread, that the government will have to take notice for the first time since the state of war was introduced. When all is said, Jaruzelski's team can do only one of two things: it can either change course, try to steer towards a political solution and start a genuine dialogue with the people or it can escalate the repression, with civil war as the inevitable consequence.

The alternative, stated in these terms, may seem unduly stark, but not to anyone aware of what really happened on 31 August and on the two days following in some parts of the country. Government propaganda is rendered powerless by the fact that these events were witnessed by everybody in at least 50 Polish towns. The authorities were only able to intervene effectively in large cities. In smaller towns, the local militia patrols, without the support of the riot squads, had to stand by and watch the developments, or else join in, after a fashion, by bringing up the rear of the protest marches. The forces at the disposal of the Ministry of Internal Affairs can control 10 or perhaps as many as 20 large towns, but no more than that, not even all the provincial capitals. The realization that the people had gained the upper hand over the government forces led the *apparat* to the excesses which resulted in at least five people being killed. We know the names of the five but have good reason to believe that the figure was in fact higher.

But the very fact that there were deaths, and that well over 4,000 people were arrested, is enough to illustrate the scale of the protest. There is no doubt that the people wholly accepted the appeal of the Solidarity Temporary Coordinating Commission of Four and behaved throughout with dignity, calm and a sense of responsibility. And this time the thief was literally caught in the act. A number of people witnessed acts of vandalism committed by rent-a-mob crowds procured by the militia. Many also saw stones being thrown by groups of youngsters who were in no way restrained by the militia, but were allowed to be filmed by television cameras.

The conspiracy against the people, hatched over a period of two years behind the closed doors of the Security Services building, emerged and demonstrated the aims and methods of the special services of the PPR.

The authorities were fully aware of the extent of the protest action but, at first, hoped to be able to conceal the facts from the public in Poland and abroad. The riot police (ZOMO), while realizing that beatings alone would not achieve the desired result, were as scared of shooting as were the workers and young people who took part in the demonstrations. It is common knowledge that throughout the history of the PPR any group responsible for firing at the workers has had to pay for it, at least in

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political terms, by being removed from power. That is why the Ministry of Internal Affairs decided instead to rely on the terrifying effect of tear gas and smoke bombs. The militia were, incidentally, hoist with their own petard when they found themselves enveloped by clouds of gas. The weapons were grossly misused: tear gas bombs were thrown through windows into flats and basement workshops, into the gateways of buildings where bystanders were sheltering, and even at innocent pedestrians making their way home. The bombs started a number of fires and injured random passers-by. These novel street warfare tactics caused widespread anger. In those places where the militia were particularly active, the gas vapour hung about for two days afterwards and one could see people walking to work with their eyes still inflamed. Even the double-talk on Polish television made the riot police admit that they felt unpopular. The real feelings of the people towards them are easy to imagine: they direct them, however, not only against those who carry out the orders, the brutal street thugs with mindless eyes staring out of boorish faces. The universal detestation and anger embraces all those who gave the orders, manipulated events and planned the conspiracy. Jaruzelski himself, the man who hoped to pass for the lesser evil and a shield against direct Soviet intervention, became the subject of universal hatred. Even if it were true that he had prevented the invasion, it is obvious that he failed to bend Moscow towards the adoption of a political solution. He is now regarded as a man conducting an anti-Polish policy in practice. The deputy Prime Minister Rakowski who, on the television programme " Pegasus " still trots out shallow pseudo-intellectual platitudes in the ingratiating manner of a nice, cultured and sensible man, has come to be widely described as the Pharisee. The *de facto* head of the Security Services and army general, Boguslaw Stachura, earned the nickname of the Godfather of the UB gang.

THE Primate of Poland still appeals to us not to let hatred rule our conduct, but what if we are being consistently, step by step, forced into it? Let us remember that stones were thrown not only by people acting in stark self-defence but also by the militia rent-a-mob. The moral lesson of these events is devastating for Jaruzelski's team: if they do not alter their political line they will catapult the country right into the abyss of civil war.

Let us also consider their tactics from a political perspective. The ruling junta is losing credibility at such a rate, even in comparison with its predecessors, that its inevitable departure is bound to happen even more speedily. It is possible that the General may try to save his skin by sacrificing one or more scapegoats. But it won't do: Rakowski's departure, for instance, would not be enough to mollify public opinion, although it would be simple to dispense with his services since he carries no political weight but simply fills the role of a propaganda mouthpiece. The people (not only the intelligentsia, but also the workers and the younger generation) ask: " Who is behind it all? " " Whose are the

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Polish hands responsible for the imposition of the state of war and for trying to stifle all genuine political activity under its umbrella? '' It is astonishing how well informed the man-in-the-street is: only in the last day or two have I heard several people (not members of an elite of any sort, nor actively engaged in politics) ask what the role of men such as Miroslaw Milewski and Boguslaw Stachura was. Milewski was a deputy-minister under Gierek, yet he is now a Central Committee secretary and a member of the Politburo. Stachura, one of the numerous deputy-ministers under Gierek, has been promoted under Jaruzelski to the post of first deputy-minister in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Having been a part of the Gierek establishment has clearly done no harm to their subsequent careers; it has advanced them. How is it then that Gierek is now no good, but that these people are more than acceptable? Who is behind them? Is it that they in fact rule the [Military] Council of National Salvation on behalf of Moscow, or is the Council as a whole entrusted with that ignominious task?

For two years now the country has undergone a period of acute political struggle provoked by the authorities, who prefer repression to agreement, and tear gas to dialogue. No wonder that people want to know who in fact makes the decisions. It is obvious that power is not being wielded by the puppets shown on television, but by Moscow hirelings ready for anything, bloodshed included. The coming autumn [1982] will bring us the final answer—what will Jaruzelski choose, dialogue or repression?

Jan K. (Gdansk)

Document, RFE (Munich), 14 Sept. 1982
Translated by Krystyna Bronkowska

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Bujak on Violence

The basic principle adopted by Solidarity, and still valid, is the use of exclusively peaceful means [in its activity]. Contrary to slanders against Solidarity, the Union never made any preparations to use force and does not wish to use force. We are against any acts of violence, street battles, hit-squads, acts of terror, armed organizations—and we do not accept any responsibility for violent acts. The policy of terror, introduced by the authorities on 13 December 1981, is still being conducted by them and assumes ever newer forms. This indicates that the authorities wish society to react violently to violence, as demonstrated by the brutal riot-police attacks on spontaneous demonstrations on 3 May 1982, the use of force against young people, and the authorities' attempts to establish secret, armed organizations among students. Members of the riot-police also transported to Warsaw cases containing [Second World War vintage] German arms. The shooting by the police of young Narozniak is yet another example of the escalation of such activities on the part of the authorities. The aim of all this can only be to cause acts of armed retribution on the part of society. This, in turn, would be used by the authorities as a pretext for the final clamp-down on all independent centres and against all those who, by using peaceful means, wish to counteract the internal occupation. It would be used as a pretext for the final and bloody pacification of society. This demands from us all the exercise of the highest degree of caution and political maturity. We have to say " no " to violence. The policy of using violence must be turned against those who use violence—and they must be responsible for its consequences.

3 June 1982

Meanwhile, at school . . .

Question: How do you manage with the children?
Danuta Walesa: I have terrible trouble. They are quite reckless . . . I have the most difficult time with Slawek, who is in the third form. He and his schoolmates got together some gangs. They beat up a boy who said that his father was a member of the Party. It's terrible that such things can happen. But just try and explain to a 10-year old boy that he shouldn't pick fights with such types, when he sees the [ZOMO] men walking the streets with truncheons. Why are they carrying these hefty sticks? To beat people up, of course. The teachers found out what my boy did and they said that he ought to be expelled from the school. They are obviously not too concerned about his education. The easiest thing would be to expel him. There are more boys like mine in his class, a whole crowd of them. Their parents are also resisting; we are more numerous than they are.
Question: So these young boys are already preparing for the struggle?
D.W.: Third formers! They have their own membership cards, safe conducts, passwords and slogans. " The Crow will not overpower the Eagle!" It's terrible.

From the underground publication
Gdansk: The State of War, 16 Mar. 1982

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Landscape After the Battle

Stanislaw Warecki

THE failure of the strikes, the agreement between the Church and Jaruzelski, the unexpected release of Walesa, and his ambiguous silence—all have undermined belief in a rapid victory or even an honourable surrender. However, all this does not mean passive acceptance of the status quo . . . People now look, with fear and hope, towards the Church . . . The average Pole does not think in terms of his own individual experience, or that of his family and friends. To be sure, shops are obviously better stocked than a year ago, though this is not reflected in private homes, where many cannot afford to buy their meat ration, and clothes are scarce, expensive and of poor quality.

Experience is not restricted to the consumption of goods, however. During the past year, the Polish population has been subjected to violence for which it was totally unprepared, and to which anyone may fall victim, no matter what they are doing, or what their views may be. In this situation, many are prepared to accept a compromise which may decrease the prevailing terror . . . though the sympathies of the Polish people remain unaltered—except that they are now sustained not by hope, as in the period of Solidarity, but by hatred for Jaruzelski and his cohorts.

It looks as though a Great Compromise is in preparation, between the army, the security police and the economic apparatus on the one hand, and the Episcopate on the other. The other possible partners in negotiation—the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP) and Solidarity—have been eliminated, though assuredly only for a time. The PUWP was politically at its last ebb during the period just before martial law, and subsequent events dealt it the death blow. Not that the Party apparatus has ceased to count, but it represents no one . . . Solidarity also went through a similar crisis. It could not " persuade " the authorities to undertake any political reforms, nor could it stop, nor even restrict, repressions.

The period between August 1980 and December 1982 was one sequence of events, a period of profound changes both in society and the ruling gang, initiated by Solidarity's infringement of the PUWP's monopoly of power. Then the political extermination of the PUWP was accompanied by a dramatic increase in the importance of Solidarity, which in turn was neutralized by the army. Meanwhile, the role of the Church continued to grow until it reached the key position it holds today. Now, the elimination of both the Party and Solidarity has untied the hands of the two remaining partners, who can begin to divide up the country—after the battle.

Ideally, events should develop as follows: both sides have their own

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fields of interest which do not run counter to one another—the Church (unlike Solidarity) is not going to fight for power and the army (unlike the PUWP) is not going to fight for power over human souls . . . The army could facilitate the spiritual mission of the Church by removing restrictions on parish activities, allowing religious teaching in schools and the extension of Catholic social organizations. In turn, the Church might well have a pacifying effect on society.

. . . But both sides are deeply conservative, and any such plan requires courage and the taking of risks . . . Both are structurally inert . . . and to put the Great Compromise into effect carries a dangerous threat to both Solidarity and the PUWP . . . All the same, despite the various risks involved, it seems as though both sides have reached certain basic decisions and are now concerned not so much with " whether?" but with " how?" and " when?"

WHAT is the opposition to do in this situation? Hitherto, our diagnosis of the nature and causes of our defeat has been largely hypothetical, as naïve as it was false. The causes of this state of affairs must be seen in our consistent refusal to give a political character to our activities (so as not to irritate the authorities by intruding into an area they reserve for themselves), and our refusal to formulate a political programme of activities. We have restricted ourselves to articulating social aims (often unrealistic and even mutually contradictory) instead of shaping them and placing them in a hierarchy. I know this evaluation is unjust to many people and groups (primarily to KOR activists) . . . but our *naïveté* and short-sightedness contributed in no small measure to the two December defeats, separated by the desperate 12-month struggle under martial law. We failed to create a long-range political programme capable of organizing society's efforts for freedom and independence. There is still time to amend this fault, and the first steps have already been taken.

. . . We must not lose sight of the fact that the Polish crisis—the opposition of an anachronistic totalitarian system to the people's aspirations to freedom—remains unaltered. Compromises entered into under our name, but without our knowledge, will not resolve this opposition, nor will sudden outbursts of determination or despair. We must transform the system gradually and before it is too late. There will not be another August; only more Decembers are possible. But Poland may not survive another December.

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Voices from the Underground

1. Zbigniew Bujak

Question: How does the balance-sheet for the year look to you?
Bujak: What happened in Poland on 13 December 1981 resembled events which had taken place before in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Even the best organized society is helpless in the face of such power exercised in such a manner. The impact of its first effect was unavoidable. We would have needed armed preparation to oppose it. The Hungarians tried that and failed. It was unavoidable as long as it had Moscow's backing.

In order to point out our successes over the past year, the comparison must be made with Hungary and Czechoslovakia. It is clear that we managed to defend ourselves and we achieved a great deal more than them. All centres of opinion-forming and political thought were destroyed in those countries. The people had no alternative. We managed to create an alternative, though not a perfect one.

No one knows whether the underground will manage to come up with an alternative political programme which could concentrate people and activities in the long run. The activities of the TKK (Temporary Coordinating Commission of Solidarity), and of Solidarity itself, may be regarded more as the organization of discussion about a programme, than as the creation of a programme. This task still lies ahead. Personally, I am convinced that next year we shall come up with just such a programme. This in itself is of considerable value, for a programme will not emerge of its own accord. Nobody is going to sit down and write one; it must be the result of activities and discussion. I reckon that if, after a year of struggle against the junta, it is possible to come up with a programme which shows the people some way out of the situation, perhaps not immediately but in the foreseeable future, while providing an alternative for the time being—that is already a considerable success.

We must look on the state of war from the point of view of a clash with the authorities. In Czechoslovakia, the suppression of honour, spirit and self-esteem, by means of demanding a declaration of loyalty [to the authorities] passed off successfully. But in Poland, the matter of a declaration collapsed, and very rapidly too. The boycott . . . of the [new] unions . . . has been one of our greatest successes. Nor do I think that this will weaken, or that the authorities will find equally powerful means of economic or other pressure to force people to enter the new unions. To give any sort of a structure to these pseudo-unions, it would really have been necessary for there to be no alternative programme, no people and no underground activities. I think these will not be lacking. Generally speaking, factory workers did not take advantage of their [old] union cards before December, even if they were members. Usually, perfidious measures

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would have to be applied, such as the distribution of food and clothes by the union to members only, in order to break anything down. I consider [our opposition to the] declarations of loyalty, [to the false] self-government and the new [pseudo-] unions, all taken together, as the greatest success of the past year.

For myself, direct activities had a different significance. I do not consider any of them sufficiently successful to warrant claiming a victory. I even consider the demonstrations of 31 July inadequate for a 10 million-strong union. But it was necessary, even essential, to stage them, in order to succeed in other areas. Demonstrations and strikes constituted a certain point of reference for the population, and provided a certain ceiling: they showed what *could* be done in Poland in the fight for the Union—it is possible, for instance, to strike under threat of dismissal from work and loss of wages, and to demonstrate despite the risk of imprisonment. In comparison with these, refusal to sign a declaration of loyalty, or not joining one of the new unions, is something small and easily done. I think that demonstrations and strikes, especially as a point of reference, play an important part. Without them, the boycott would be considerably weakened.

I regard the demonstrations of 31 August as sufficiently extensive to provide support for the underground, but at the same time not strong enough to protect the legality of the Union. I looked on 31 August as the last chance of saving Solidarity's right to legal action. And when it appeared that there were not 150,000 demonstrators, but only 15,000 or 50,000, then the authorities' decision to outlaw Solidarity proved to be 10 times easier.

When we discussed 10 November, obviously the likelihood of it not working out was taken into consideration. The main arguments were to some extent political: that it created a degree of threat which would force the other side to take certain steps. It could be said that this is precisely what happened. I believe that present prospects do not allow us to evaluate precisely how far the action of 10 November was successful. If it proves in future that the issue of a fixed schedule of protest actions influenced the decision to free Lech Walesa, to extend an invitation to the Pope to visit Poland, and to announce the suspension of martial law—were it to prove that this tiny one-tenth had somehow forced these issues, then the declaration of a strike was necessary, although I well know the cost of it and what a powerful blow is dismissal to a worker.

Question: It is said that mass actions cannot succeed without efficient leadership.

Bujak: I do not want to be treated in the least bit like a leader. We cannot direct or lead anything—we can only suggest or indicate certain things. Before December, we were able to direct Solidarity. Since December, these possibilities have ceased and further consequences have resulted from this. We have been receiving letters to the effect that there is no leadership, no organization, that the TKK is ineffective—this is due to the fact that the TKK or RKW were recognized as the leadership in the

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sense of organization, steering and giving directives. But that, after all, was not the point.

Question: In view of this, what then is the TKK?

Bujak: It could be called the political leadership, although the word is dangerous in this context. It is certainly not the technical leadership for that is something which is simply not to be realized. Activity in the underground has put barriers in the way of certain organizational possibilities which we are not in a position to cross.

Question: Why not?

Bujak: It's a problem of personnel. The Home Army (AK—during the Second World War) could largely depend upon the professional officers in the Polish Army. We had nothing similar in Solidarity. The Home Army had a judiciary, or something of the sort, in operation which existed in the event of failure to execute an order. We could not have this in Solidarity—no one can be expelled from the underground. Everything operated on the principle that either an individual volunteers and works, or he does not. Orders are not automatically carried out, but are done on the basis of agreement—this obviously delays organization considerably. There was also an extended period of selection, during which those who either could not, or did not wish to, take action were discarded, and those who for various reasons had to be checked, were vetted. It is worth looking at how the regional branches developed; the number of activists continues to increase, but this is a slow process as contacts are made, people checked, and organization advances.

I would also like to add that in the first days [of martial law], when we began to go into hiding, it was generally felt that we had but a short time, that if it all worked out by the spring, that would already be considered a success. Later this was extended—to the summer, the autumn, and indeed to the entire year.

I think that the myth about the security police's omnipresence and omnipotence has been exploded. Not entirely, for many traps were set to fool us. But the claims that nothing could be kept hidden from them, quite common at first, have proved to be unfounded.

This shows that it is not necessary to give up such forms of underground activity, and that when critical moments occur this is how we must operate. If we have succeeded in keeping our cover and carrying on our activities throughout this year, it is largely because the number of persons prepared to collaborate [with the authorities] was very small. I feel convinced that had there been a large proportion of people in Warsaw who would have wished to give us away they would have spotted us somewhere and betrayed us. As this was not the case, it shows that one of the aims of the population was to see that we did not get caught. Everyone felt this to be a personal duty.

Zbigniew Bujak interviewed in *Tygodnik Mazowsze* (published underground in Warsaw), No. 36, 1 Dec. 1982.

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2. Wiktor Kulerski

Question: Who are you?
Wiktor Kulerski: One of the many Solidarity members given a two-year mandate to act as a union official and one of the few who is still able to perform this duty with relative freedom, and who shall continue to do so until only the slightest possibility for it remains.
Question: My question concerned something rather different, namely, who are you today? You were elected when Solidarity had legal status, but have carried out your duties under very different circumstances. How would you define your role at the moment, that is to say, your personal role and that of the whole underground Solidarity group? Are you the leader of a resistance movement, or of social protest, or perhaps you are experts and commentators?
Kulerski: With regard to our immediate, everyday situation, I would say that we are " the Jews of this war." The authorities hunt and pursue us relentlessly and when caught we face certain imprisonment. As for our function, I would not even begin to analyse it in the categories you put forward; they were appropriate to the time before the state of war, but now they have had a great deal of extra significance added to them. The people who are not in prison, who have been able to avoid capture by those seeking to terrorize society, are now, above all, symbols of resistance, continuity and activity. They must lay the foundations for the future.
Question: That is of course very true, but more seems to be expected. Surely you don't believe that all that people need today is a symbol of yesterday's freedom and solidarity?
Kulerski: Obviously not. But the existence of such a group of people active outside the official framework has intrinsic psychological value which must not be underestimated. Clearly, therefore, any question of withdrawal or resignation must not even be considered.
Question: You mean the temptation to come out of hiding and place oneself in the hands of the authorities?
Kulerski: Yes! Exhaustion, stress, and other factors must take their toll. I would not under any circumstances judge the people concerned, because I have no right to do so, but for myself I can say firmly that retreat is impossible; we cannot evade the new role assigned to us by recent events. Before 13 December, the regional union authorities numbered several dozen people, the National Commission somewhat less, and the fact that some were less active than others was not particularly important. Now when there are only a few of us left, when we are being blackmailed by terror like the rest of society, it is vital that we remain at our stations.

The situation has imposed new responsibilities and obligations on us.
Question: What precisely do you mean by " remaining at your stations," other than the fulfilment of a purely symbolic function?
Kulerski: Organizing union activity in particular and developing a wide movement of solidarity in general.

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Question: A movement of resistance?
Kulerski: I would rather avoid that word; what I had in mind was more a movement which would preserve our cultural, social, and national identity.
Question: Nevertheless, that amounts to resistance, does it not?
Kulerski: Perhaps I should elaborate. In traditional terms a movement of resistance implies negative activity, it is always directed against someone or something. I think that as far as we are concerned our primary goal should be to build and create, and only then to oppose the external pressure which seeks to destroy and fragment us for its own ends. The most important thing is to ensure that society is self-reliant and vigorous, that is what we are trying to organize. We act as a sort of point of suspension for social hopes, every one of our defeats is a defeat for them, but our perseverance and continuing activity show that society is still independent, unbowed, and continuing to create its own structures.
Question: How long can you act in this way?
Kulerski: As long as it is possible. Maybe for years, maybe for a much shorter time.
Question: And how long, in your opinion, will people continue to take an interest in you? Surely you must experience some anxiety over this, that at some time in the future the mainstream of events will begin to pass you by. Today this seems impossible, but let's assume that in a few years the atmosphere cools down, tensions expire, moderate leaders emerge who will insist on acting legally . . . What then?
Kulerski: Biology uses an interesting concept, that of delitescent, or hidden, life into which organisms withdraw when existing conditions are unfavourable to their survival. I think our society is going through a similar process at the moment; the formation of the underground from the very beginning of the war, the search for possibilities of survival without abandoning one's identity, are all sure signs of this. The attitude displayed by the government so far can only deepen these practices. When the appropriate time comes, however, when society feels that it must re-emerge from its cocoon, then . . . We are needed to assist with this re-emergence.
Question: Society will once again refuse to cooperate? Once again!
Kulerski: That is quite possible, but by no means predetermined. Returning to your original question, it is obvious that the ranks of active people must change. But remember that our society has managed to survive over 200 years of external and internal oppression and people were always found to carry out the hazardous tasks involved in this.
Question: Which oppression do you have in mind?
Kulerski: That of invaders, occupiers, neighbouring powers and our own totalitarian regime . . . Man is an intrinsically freedom-seeking creature who cannot tolerate being the object of someone else's control, rather than his own master. That is why, in my opinion, as long as humanity survives, people will be interested in controlling their own destiny and striving for freedom.

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Question: Admirably put, in historico-philosophical categories, but I feel inclined to say, I hope this will not offend you, that it also displays another human quality which has forced you to rationalize your present position and functions simply in order to ease the difficulties and strains involved in them. I seriously wonder how many people are able to see their situation in these terms, people acutely worried about their livelihood and their children, people rather sick of, and offended at, being the " European pariah " and living in a country where peace seems to be impossible? Tell me also how Solidarity, which showed determination and strength in its heyday, can now show endurance?

Kulerski: I would answer by saying that we must begin by looking at post-August history as a whole. 13 December is, in spite of everything, a continuation of it, not a reversal; the essence of our activities remains positive and creative, people who wish to be active must continually build links within society—protest and opposition is not enough.

Question: More concretely?

Kulerski: You have the KOS groups (Committees for Social Resistance), social self-defence, regional union authorities, the TKK, an underground press, and independent education schemes. I was amazed and very encouraged by the fact that when we suggested the last possibility, sources from many groups of young people informed us that it was " old hat " to them and that such schemes were already in existence.

Question: Do you think that intellectual activity is a real need in the present circumstances?

Kulerski: More than that, I would say that it is an invaluable method of preserving one's identity, which as you know is as much under threat today as our physical well-being. It is a social self-defence mechanism.

Question: There is an impression, however, that many people expect more than this, that they are still waiting for concrete action.

Kulerski: To my way of thinking, when society is relatively free to act as it chooses, a healthy parallelism will develop between its thinking, its theory, and the practical activities it pursues—this is obvious—when, by means of force, people are reduced to a state of quasi-slavery, a divergence of these two processes must, equally obviously, also take place. We lived through 18 months in which there was hardly enough time to think, facts had to be created immediately, for the present and even for the day before yesterday. This period is once again over, not unnaturally in our geo-political situation, and we should adapt to realities in which the opportunity for action is seriously reduced. A time for preparation has ensued and we must exploit its possibilities to the full. It seems to me that in making your last remark you failed to take this into account.

Question: Do you think that society perceives the situation in a similar way?

Kulerski: I think it is beginning to. Whereas in the first six months of the war, attention was almost exclusively focused on protest actions, a general strike, an underground nation, etc., now it has shifted, even to

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my surprise, to my conception of an underground society, which was at first regarded rather sceptically.

Question: In that case, why is there any need at all for demonstrations and spectacular actions which endanger people's lives?

Kulerski: To keep up society's morale, to make manifest the latent solidarity we all feel, and to get large numbers of people all working together; remember, these actions are also very effective means of organization.

Question: And how long must they continue?

Kulerski: Until society develops a degree of self-awareness, strength, and internal coherence, able to withstand any external pressure which will make them superfluous.

Wiktor Kulerski interviewed in *Tygodnik Wojenny* (published underground in Warsaw), Nos. 36, 37 & 38.

3. Wladyslaw Hardek

" THE course of protests on 10 November induces many people to be pessimistic. I do not want to be misunderstood. I know well that the strikes and demonstrations on this occasion did not turn out in the way everybody expected. But despite this, I do not see it as our defeat. The authorities used everything at their disposal: ZOMO, the army, and propaganda. Cracow, in particular Nowa Huta, looks like a besieged city, with heavily armed patrols, dogs and heavy armour; all this was intended to break our spirit. But despite all this THERE WAS A PROTEST! Strike pressure forced the authorities to agree to set a time for the Pope's visit and the release of Lech Walesa. These were our demands and we have already won them!!! Now we must fight for further concessions from the authorities for the benefit of the whole of society. We must demand the release of thousands of arrested, sentenced, and interned, but we must also gain the possibility of forming authentic workers' self-management. We must not allow ourselves to be cheated by empty gestures on the part of the authorities. The compromise, about which Lech Walesa spoke, is necessary; we are all witnesses to this. Our activities up until now have been aimed precisely at convincing the authorities that without a compromise with society it is not possible to take Poland out of its crisis. But it is important to understand what sort of compromise it is to be, how far the authorities must go and how far Solidarity and society can go. The authorities know this and do not try to disable us with partial concessions, to disarm us morally or to split Solidarity from the Church. The SB (Security Services) are writing sordid slogans on church walls, using our symbol and printing leaflets quoting the words of the Primate. None of us should allow ourselves to be deceived by these provocations. We must remember that our strength was, and is, solidarity in our actions, the resoluteness of our stand and our

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sacrifice when the need arises. We must not allow ourselves to be dispersed at present, we cannot withdraw from our basic demands!

" We are not defenceless: we have an effectively applied weapon—the boycott of the regime's pseudo-unions. We have the possibility of building a society which is firm in its stand and in its fight for democracy and decent living conditions in Poland."

Wladyslaw Hardek interviewed in *Hutnik* (published underground), No. 34.

4. The War Goes On

THE war goes on. The Military Council of National Salvation (WRON—CROW) has not been dissolved. Martial law has not been repealed. Civil rights have not been restored. . . .

What then has CROW offered us? Letters are no longer going to be stamped " censored." The taped messages which tell you that your telephone call is being monitored will be disconnected. It will be possible to go to the Tatra mountains without a special permit. And that's about all—apart from a few minor legal untruths. And here they are: internment as such will no longer exist, instead there will be enforced enrolment in military re-education units (there are already several hundred people in Czerwony Bor, many of them sick or invalids, isolated Solidarity activists, many of them former internees, all treated with particular severity).

Ordinary arrests will still take place, of course . . . Any political, social, or trade unionist convictions which do not suit the authorities will continue to be sought out and punished by the full majesty of the law (in direct contradiction to the constitution which guarantees freedom of convictions and speech), and will be dealt with by military courts . . . Summary trials, partly to be discontinued, will still be applied to clerical workers and civil servants (including the militia?). This move is calculated to show that the authorities are equally severe with their own. However, this ruling also applied during the Stalinist era, and, as we all know, that was not a time particularly noted for its law-abiding ways.

The militarization of the economy is to be stopped officially. However, it is to be retained in the mining industry, in energy production, in the transport network, and in those industries working on operational or defence programmes—thus, in effect, in the whole economy . . .

So why do the authorities stage these comic operettas in the Seym? The intention is to con the Poles and the West, in order to ease economic sanctions, and create minimal support inside the country amongst those who would believe in the illusion . . . The authorities are afraid to look reality in the face. After a whole year of military rule they cannot admit defeat . . . If, as the authorities now claim, the nation has learned to love

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its army and hate the extremists, then there is no justification for the state of war. However, this is not so, and the authorities are not able to give up their system of repression and action outside the law—they must retain it, but change the trappings. And that is what the operetta is all about . . .

Society wants conciliation because it wants to build a prosperous and just country. Unfortunately, the authorities constantly reject " the outstretched hand offering reconciliation," to quote General Jaruzelski. The public has nothing but goodwill, the government has tanks and more tanks. The war, therefore, goes on . . .

Tygodnik Wojenny (published underground),
No. 44/46, 14 Dec. 1982.

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Declaration by KOS*

THE Polish people were placed in a difficult position on 10 November. They could well remember recent police brutality . . . they knew that the authorities had not hesitated to shoot at unarmed demonstrators, they remembered mass sackings of those who had attempted to organize short protest strikes, they were generally convinced that they had no chance of victory in the event of open confrontation with the forces of the regime. All this was strengthened by the stance taken by the Church. Primate Glemp came out unequivocally against strikes and street demonstrations. At the same time, the TKK treated the strikes and demonstrations as a sort of referendum for or against the very idea of Solidarity. The events of 10 November reflected the internal contradictions within society . . . the most frequent reaction was . . . an intermediate one . . . the eight-hour general strike did not take place. In the majority of workplaces in Poland there were short symbolic strikes, in many factories there were go-slows, flowers were laid in places which were symbolic for Solidarity, posters and banners were hung up . . . short protest meetings were held and those killed were honoured with a minute's silence . . .

The authorities tried to hush-up or suppress all protest actions of this kind. Underground Solidarity made a serious error in stating that the strikes and demonstrations would be a referendum on social support for the idea of Solidarity. The authorities consequently aimed to prove to the world that Polish society had accepted the de-legalization of Solidarity, that stabilization was in progress, that the authorities now had the possibility of obtaining social support. Announcing that the strikes of 10 November would be a referendum was a mistake—a mistake that should not be repeated. It must be stated clearly that 10 November was not a defeat for the resistance, was not a defeat for the idea of Solidarity. . . .

. . . Nothing has happened to justify the growing defeatism and divisions that one sees in our ranks. Such stances have nothing to do with an analysis of the general political situation, but rather have to do with the disappointment that comes from unrealistic expectations. After all, we have long known that the struggle that we are engaged in cannot be won at a stroke, that it is likely to last many years . . . our strength is not military strength, which could lead us to victory by way of direct confrontation . . . but rather internal rejection of serfdom. . . . Since 10 November our tasks have become even clearer. We must expand an effective mutual aid organization—so that our solidarity will find concrete expression. We must build up the underground press . . . . a network of independent centres of education, which will build an

* The Committee for Social Resistance.

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independent culture—so that the people's culture will not be enslaved and poisoned.

We must build an efficient underground network between different social groups, different workplaces, regions, etc., so that . . . general actions of resistance will be made possible . . . . the fact that the authorities have been forced to introduce a façade of " liberalization " may make our activity easier.

. . . We shall be able to exploit the new situation for our own ends, as long as we do not allow ourselves to be influenced by the new methods of manipulation that the authorities will use against society, and as long as we continue to refuse to collaborate with the regime, while at the same time wisely taking advantage of legal and semi-legal ways of affecting our social reality, and as long as—above all—we do not allow ourselves to be divided.

15 November 1982

Tygodnik Mazowsze, No. 34, 17 November 1982

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Declaration of Solidarity

IN the face of the various moves planned by the regime to persuade Polish citizens to give up any further fight for their rights, we the undersigned, representatives of various social groupings and institutions forced underground by the totalitarian system, unite our efforts in the social liberation movement Solidarity. We declare that:

— The aim of our activities is the freedom and self-rule of Polish society and the independence of the Polish state. It is impossible to ensure the permanent existence of legal, sovereign, social organizations in a country which is not independent. We will continue the activities which have led to the establishment of the independent, self-governing trade union Solidarity, which embodies the aspirations of Polish society in its entirety. We shall fight for the fulfilment of the programme and the idea of Solidarity.

— We shall endeavour to build a free society, immediately capable of defending its rights. The totalitarian system imposed by the Soviet Union and maintained by force by a ruling class that has willingly given up its freedom, is not capable of reforming itself. It will not fall as long as we acquiesce to its existence. We appeal to all members of Polish society and to Poles living abroad to contribute to the building of independent social institutions: our freedom depends on every one of us, every day and in every way.

— We reject the call to come out from underground. For the regime, any area of social life not controlled by the authorities is called " underground." In a country in which the authorities themselves are illegal, the extent of our freedom depends on underground activities. Thanks to Solidarity, social links have not weakened; we can live through this further period of contempt with dignity. To come out from underground would amount to our acceptance of the loss of the nation's free will.

— We will fight for the release of prisoners of conscience and for those imprisoned for Union activities; for the cessation of political reprisals and in order to limit the scope of lawlessness; for the return of free trade unions. We will fight for independent farmers' and students' organizations, for free associations of scientists and artists. We will fight for freedom of education, for a free press and publications, and for a culture free from censorship.

— We categorically condemn collaboration with the totalitarian system. However, we will utilize any and all possibilities to act effectively for social liberation in organizations and institutions controlled by the regime, as well as in underground organizations. We will continue to identify and ostracize those who are especially active in the strengthening of totalitarianism and who are cooperating with the organs of oppression.

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— The use of violence is against our ideals. However, we will not give up the right to active defence should the situation force us to defend ourselves. Social self-defence is not limited to direct reaction to political reprisals: it is above all the creation of social and political circumstances in which the possibility of reprisals cannot be entertained. We will act against the regime's transgressions of international pacts and covenants defending human and civil rights, officially ratified by the regime.
— We express our solidarity with all societies and nations subjugated by Soviet totalitarianism and imperialism. We express our solidarity with these societies and nations in their struggle for independence and for human and religious freedom. We will not achieve independence while Poland is surrounded by nations that are not free. We express our solidarity with all societies and nations fighting for their identity, unity and sovereignty. We appeal to all democratic societies to continue their support for our struggle for human freedom and dignity—so that our today does not become their tomorrow.

We call upon all independent institutions and organizations to support this declaration of solidarity by signing its text. . . .

Committee for Social Resistance KOS, CDN Publications, Independent Literary Publication *Wezwanie*, Editors of the political quarterly *Krytyka*, Inter-Factory Coordinating Committee of Solidarity, independent Education Movement, Centre for Current Analyses Oba, Krag Publications, Mazowsze Region Solidarity Defence Committee, Editors of Independent Education Movement Publications *Tu i Teraz*, Inter-Factory Workers' Committee Solidarity, Editors of *Wola*, KOS Publications, Cassette Radio Station "Warszawa," Actors' Solidarity, Teachers' Solidarity

12 December 1982

Uncensored Poland—News Bulletin (London),
No. 23, 31 December 1982

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Declaration of Solidarity: Debate

(an excerpt)

THE Declaration of Solidarity of 12 December 1982, signed to date by most of the important underground institutions and structures of the Mazowsze Region, is still not only a subject of controversy, but is also surrounded by misconceptions. Let us begin, then, by dispelling these misconceptions.

The Declaration is not a programmatic document of some new underground structure or organization. The signatories of the Declaration have learned from the experiences of the years 1980–81, when, in order to maintain the fictitious unity of ideas and aims, Solidarity had to pay the price—namely paralysis of the ability to formulate long-term programmes. Because of this experience, the signatories of the Declaration do not give up their organizational or political identity. The Declaration is simply the expression of their common attitudes. Whatever the political differences, and they are sometimes very pronounced between the various underground organizations, these can be accommodated within the desire to reach a common goal. This common goal is the liberation of Polish society and the continuation of the struggle against the totalitarian regime. Thus the descriptive name: Social Liberation Movement " Solidarity."

There is, however, another even more basic reason for which we are against any form of organizational integration of the underground movement. We are not at a stage of acute confrontation [with the authorities]. Confrontation primarily requires force, coherence and discipline. We are not at that stage. Just the opposite: we have entered the stage of a long drawn-out conflict, in which autonomous, small groups are more efficient in their struggle against the huge apparatus of repression. And, finally, plurality is our aim, not just a means of achieving our aim. Consequently, we do not intend to abandon plurality.

In our present position, facing the pressure of events and the fragmentation of the [underground] movement, it is easy to lose sight of our primary aims. This applies equally to the underground, and to society. This is why the Declaration, this collection of obvious truths, was formulated, and this is why we have signed it.

Some people, sometimes well-established opposition activists, say that the publication of the Declaration was a tragic political mistake . . . some potential signatories submitted specific objections concerning specific parts of the Declaration, making their signature conditional upon the introduction of certain changes in wording. . . . However, it became impossible, after a certain point, to consider any new specific objections, even if only because it would mean going back to those who had already agreed upon the text and signed it. This does not imply that discussion concerning the text of the Declaration is closed—just the

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reverse. We hope that the representatives of the various political orientations will state their attitude to the document. We hope that such a discussion could lead to the formulation of a new, larger document—not simply a declaration of principles, but a serious action programme for Polish society.

The underground bulletin *KOS*, No. 23, 15 January 1983

Towards " Normalization ": the Party View

" Comrades, what is the situation today as regards the front of struggle against the enemy of socialism? . . . . The struggle is still going on. The enemy, although weakened, forced onto the defensive and increasingly isolated, is nevertheless not surrendering. Neither the problem of the time needed for full normalization nor the social costs of this process have yet been resolved. It is in the interests of the enemies of socialist Poland that this time should be as long as possible and the costs as high as possible. They act according to the rule ' the worse, the better.' This is an order from the reactionary forces of the West; the enemy at home is trying to meet it exactly. Adapting their tactics to the new situation, they are trying to achieve the permanent entrenchment of anti-socialist, counter-revolutionary opposition in the political life of the country. This is the aim of the concept of pluralism being put forward, which in fact means striving towards the so-called free play of political forces. . . .

" At the beginning of May [1983], amid profound shifts in social moods towards normalization, work and social calm, the opponent made his latest attempts to keep his head above water. Despite large-scale preparations supported by the stepped-up offensive from Western centres of psychological warfare, these undertakings did not produce the intended results, although they provided ammunition for anti-Polish propaganda in the West. . . .

" The crisis shock gave birth, in many sections of the working class, to a susceptibility to hostile agitation and to various types of demagogy, often using apparently correct slogans, calculated with an eye to the lack of class experience of the young workers. . . .

" The Party is paying much attention to the situation among the intelligentsia. Within this community we can see that views and attitudes are becoming polarized. Despite clearly tangible positive processes, the situation within this community remains complex. . . .

" Comrades, matters connected with the upbringing of the younger generation are at the centre of attention for the Party. The ruination perpetrated in the consciousness of the younger generation is extraordinarily extensive. Elementary educational principles have been breached, with school and university students being cynically dragged into political in-fighting which exploits their natural inclination for fault-finding and their lack of experience. The resulting devastation is so profound that much time, wisdom and patience is needed to get rid of it. . . .

" A constant, important task, to which the Party devotes a great deal of attention, is the consolidation of the socialist state, streamlining its structure and forms of action. . . . True democracy is not possible in a weak and ineffectual state, just as without democracy a socialist state is not fully strong and efficient. A great deal has already been done in this respect. . . . The Party has overcome the crisis of democratic centralism. It is regaining its organizational vigour. . . . Party organizations within editorial boards, and editorial boards in charge of the Party press, must counteract attempts to use the mass media for the purpose of disseminating alien or confused views; they must engage in polemics with the publications which still appear [unofficially] and which are contrary to our Party's policy and ideology."

Speech by Jozef Czyrek at the 12th Party Plenum, 31 May 1983

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Three Declarations

1. To Working People

IN the name of Solidarity and in the name of the working people of Poland, greetings to all working people on the holiday of 1 May. Polish workers will be demonstrating on that day under the banner of international solidarity. The 1 May holiday was born out of the struggle for the dignity of human labour. In 1886, workers in Chicago bought the right to representation in their own labour union at the cost of their own lives. For us Poles, Chicago was repeated in Gdansk in December 1970, in the mining area of Silesia in 1981, in Lublin in 1982, and we are aware that it may recur many times over. The union movement has been destroyed in states ruled by the communists and the permitted union organizations are merely façades which are totally subordinate to the Party-state employer. In August 1980, for the first time in countries with " real socialism," we won the right to have independent trade unions. Their monopoly threatened, the communist authorities were not able to come to terms with this fact. On 13 December 1981, the counter-revolution struck, and again, as had happened 100 years ago, workers' blood flowed. Tanks and machine-guns were used against the unarmed. The goal was to destroy the independent union movement. For over one year, our Union has been active illegally, under conditions of police terror. Thousands of Solidarity activists were interned and imprisoned. Thousands remain behind bars, with long sentences. Strikers and demonstrators were beaten. Hundreds have been crippled and several dozen have been murdered in cold blood, only because they stood in defence of their freedom and dignity. Repressions continue. Union members are thrown out of work. Many production enterprises have been militarized. The organization of forced labour camps has been announced. People are persecuted for availing themselves of their natural human rights. Arrests and political trials continue. The political trial of seven of the highest Union authorities, who have been held in prison for 15 months, is being prepared. A show trial of the members of the former Workers' Self-Defence Committee (KOR) is also being prepared. The Polish government has violated all the basic international agreements about workers' and citizens' rights; it has broken all agreements made with its own society and has trampled its own declarations.

Solidarity will not allow itself to be destroyed. Solidarity is alive and relinquishing its defence of the rights of the Polish working people. We are struggling for the right to be freely active, for freedom for political prisoners and for an end to persecution against the independent Union movement's activists. We will act with determination, perseverance, and caution. Our goal is social peace based on respect for the law which society acknowledges as its own. Only then will the toil of millions of

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Poles be the source of spiritual values and material resources for the whole nation.

In organizing independent demonstrations last year, the workers demonstrated that, for the Polish working people, 1 May has become a day of struggle for social rights. We are not alone in this fight. From the first days of August 1980, we have received help from working people throughout the world. On the eve of the 1 May holiday, we would like to thank trade unions and other organizations abroad, as well as private individuals, who through their generosity gave evidence of solidarity among people. To all working people who still have that first step towards independent trade unions ahead of them, we offer greetings, hope and encouragement. To those who live in democratic countries, we wish perseverance in strengthening and developing the independent trade union movement. Here in Poland, we are struggling for something more than just our own concerns. We deeply believe that our struggle has universal dimensions. It expands the scope of freedom and justice in the modern world. We need your support. On 1 May, demonstrate your solidarity with the struggle of the Polish working world.

Temporary Coordinating Commission of Solidarity:
Zbigniew Bujak, Mazowsze Region;
Wladyslaw Hardek, Malopolska Region;
Bogdan Lis, Gdansk Region; Jozef Pinior,
Lower Silesia Region; Eugeniusz Szumiejko,
member of the National Commission
Presidium.

23 March 1983

2. Anniversary of the Constitution of 3 May

WE will soon be commemorating the anniversary of the Constitution of 3 May in Poland, approved by our forefathers 192 years ago. This document was to lead the country along the road of modern political and social development. But the rebirth of the nation and the state was cut short by armed Russian intervention which supported a group of Polish political traitors contesting the Constitution. The Republic fell. But the Polish people were not quashed. During the years of bondage, the memory of the Constitution strengthened their faith in the final victory of the struggle for independence.

In August 1980, our movement initiated a process of political and economic change. We created the opportunity to save Poland from the catastrophe towards which the communist authorities had been pushing it for the past 30 years. Today, as a new group of traitors again attempts to eliminate this opportunity, the tradition of 3 May is particularly dear to us.

On the shop-floors on 3 May, in our Sunday best and wearing our national colours, we will pay tribute with a minute's silence at midday, to that generation of Poles—Polish patriots—who gave up their lives in the

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struggle for their country's freedom and the rights of its people. May that day be a day of reflection, for all Polish families, on the nation's past history and our duty to our country.

Temporary Coordinating Commission of Solidarity
23 March 1983

3. The Visit of Pope John Paul II

MILLIONS of Poles, members of the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarity, joyfully await the arrival of the Holy Father in Poland. For us, this is a visit of peace and hope.

The Holy Father is coming to a suffering country, where families grieve for the dead and the imprisoned, to a country where basic human rights are being crushed, to a nation whose soul has been wounded. Polish society has the right to expect the announcement of an amnesty for all political prisoners, which would create a suitable climate to ensure a dignified welcome to Poland for the Holy Father. We will never abandon the struggle for the release of our imprisoned brothers, nor the struggle against suffering and oppression. Causing street disturbances has never been our goal, and those who caused them must bear the blame [for the violence used]. The authorities must not now use the Pope's visit to blackmail Polish society, threatening to cancel the visit [because of disturbances].

We await the Holy Father's visit with dignity, to bear witness to the truth. During the visit, we will refrain from any kind of protest action.

Temporary Coordinating Commission of Solidarity
5 April 1983

The Pope and Big Brother

" General Konrad Straszewski, who is in charge of the Pope's security during his visit. . . . [and]. . . . who is also deputy Interior Minister, said that fewer than 73,000 militiamen would be used to control the visit, [but] he made it clear that reserves would be called up.

" There are also various measures to make sure that workers cannot leave their factories in one part of the country to join the Pope in the south.

" Many workers have been told that they cannot take holidays during the period of the visit. Universities are being closed . . ."

The Times, 31 May 1983

" The purpose of the Pope's tour of his native land was never to bring solace to an atheist regime which is repressing the just aspirations of the Polish people. It is as pontiff visiting his flock, not head of state, that John Paul is welcomed to Poland. If General Jaruzelski arranges the programme in such a way as to reduce contact with the population to the minimum, or if police harassment of Lech Walesa, the living symbol of Solidarity, continues and he is prevented from meeting the Pope, then it is vital that people in Poland and the West should learn what is being done, and who is responsible."

The Times, 15 June 1983

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Early Soviet Designs on Poland

Adam Westoby & Robin Blick

IT was Stalin who achieved a bloc with an ultra-Right Germany as the cornerstone of Soviet foreign policy, cemented by their joint military occupation of Poland. Less well known is the fact that a comparably ruthless, and in many ways similar, strategy for the conquest of Poland and its partition with Germany was a central option in the plans of Bolshevik leaders, when their armies penetrated deep into Polish territory during the war of 1920—an option abandoned for the time being, following their rout outside Warsaw.

This article seeks to outline Bolshevik political conduct in the Soviet-Polish war, and to cast light on a number of interesting aspects: the extent to which the Bolshevik leaders acted as Russian imperialists for whom Poland was either a subject country or a buffer with Germany; their willingness, like Stalin later, to impose a police-puppet regime on a conquered Poland; their readiness, as prospects of revolution in Western Europe receded at the beginning of the 1920s, to seek support from the extreme Right of the political spectrum, provided that it suited Russian foreign policy.

Polish-Soviet hostilities began after the German armies, which remained interposed between them, withdrew in February 1919. For a while, hostilities were interspersed with negotiations. Then Pilsudski's offensive into the Ukraine in April 1920 forced the Red Army, initially, to retreat. But, by advancing so far as to capture Kiev, Pilsudski overreached himself; from June, the Red Army regained the offensive and began a long advance until it converged on Warsaw in early August. In Germany, the Soviet advance elicited enthusiasm from both ends of the political spectrum—from the communist Left and also from much of the nationalist and proto-Nazi Right, hoping for the destruction of Poland, lynch-pin of the Versailles Treaty and its containment of Germany. " Everyone in Germany," reflected Lenin two months later, " even the blackest reactionaries and monarchists, said that the Bolsheviks will save us, when they saw the Versailles peace splitting open at all its seams."[1] As the Red Army regained the offensive which was to carry it deep into Poland, the attitude of Germany became a crucial factor which Soviet secret diplomacy anxiously sought to enlist in its favour. In April, the Soviet representative in Berlin, Victor Kopp, had sought joint military action against Poland. In July, he gave assurances that the Red Army would stop at the old 1914 frontier, i.e. the former boundary between Russia and Germany, when Poland had not existed. He reportedly also negotiated a plan with a figure close to the main army

[1] Cf. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31 (Moscow, 1960–70), p. 326.

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command (the German General Staff was formally abolished) whereby as soon as the Red Army took Warsaw, German Freikorps forces (unofficial ultra-Right units formed of demobilized officers at the disposal of the army command) would advance into Poland as far as the old German frontier.[2]

The situation was dramatically reversed by the battle of Warsaw on 16 August. Pilsudski's forces, now fighting for their national existence, roundly defeated Tukhachevsky's. As they retreated, key Bolshevik leaders came to see the aid of German military leaders as the only way to turn the table again. On 26 August, the former Young Turk leader Enver Pasha, then in Moscow and in effect in Soviet service, relayed the following bold if " unofficial " suggestion on behalf of Trotsky's Deputy Commissar for War to General Hans von Seeckt, chief of the German military apparatus, with whom Enver was on very close terms:

> There is a party here which has real power, and Trotsky also belongs to this party, which is for an agreement with Germany. This party would be ready to recognize the old German frontier of 1914. And they see only one way out of the present world chaos—that is, cooperation with Germany and Turkey. In order to strengthen the position of this party and to win the whole Soviet government for the cause, would it not be possible to give unofficial help, and if possible sell arms? . . . I think it important that you should come to an understanding with their representatives in order that Germany's position should also be clear and certain. To help the Russians, one can, in the corridor or in some suitable place, bring into being a volunteer army or an insurrectionary movement.

Enver's letter from Moscow was far more than a personal proposal. Its (unidentified) courier, carrying it to Seeckt, had " full authority " to negotiate with him in " complete secrecy."[3]

Such suggestions, if executed, would undoubtedly have meant the Russo-German repartition of Poland almost 20 years before this actually took place at the hands of Stalin and Hitler. But secret overtures do not necessarily mean what they say. Was the offer of a bloc with the German Right and military leadership a serious Soviet option, or merely a ruse to ensure German neutrality? To evaluate Soviet policy, we must look at both the Soviet conduct of the war, and the political situation in Germany.

THE idea of an alliance, especially an economic *rapprochement* with Germany—preferably a communist Germany, but failing that a capitalist one—had already begun to germinate in the thinking of some Bolsheviks since the failure of the Spartacist uprising in January-February 1919. German capital and technical expertise could help Russia

[2] J. Erickson, *The Soviet High Command* (London, 1962), p. 148; J. Korbel, *Poland Between East and West* (Princeton, 1963), pp. 85–88; E. H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923* (London, 1953), III, p. 324.

[3] J. F. L. von Seeckt, *Aus Seinem Leben 1918–1936*, F. von Rathenanau (ed.) (Leipzig, 1940), pp. 306–307; G. Freund, *Unholy Alliance* (London, 1957), p. 79.

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rebuild her shattered economy, re-knitting the close pre-war links. In the absence of formal communications between the two governments, during most of 1919, the rooms of Karl Radek (under benign " arrest " in Berlin since early in the year) became a sort of clearing house for approaches. Into Radek's " political salon," as he called it, came German officers, industrialists, right-wing politicians as well as communists and occasional social democrats. The idea of a new Russo-German alliance was mooted in several forms. When Radek was finally returned to Moscow in January 1920, he was one of the earliest articulate advocates of the " peaceful co-existence " of Soviet Russia with capitalist states (pending their communist revolutions) and especially of links with Germany. He was then persuaded that there was no short-term prospect of revolution in Germany, and was to oppose the notion that a Russian Red Army could spark a revolution in Poland.

Within both the Soviet leadership and the German Communist Party (KPD)—as much opposed to Versailles as the German Right—a powerful current anticipated the " Leftism " that was later to help Hitler to power in the " third period." A recurrent element in the swings of Comintern, and especially KPD, policy in the early 1920s was an equal, if not greater, hostility towards Weimar parliamentarism and the social democrats, as towards the Right. The so-called " Kapp *putsch* " of 13 March 1920 brought this tendency near to the surface. This short-lived *coup*, based on ultra-Right officers commanding army units near Berlin and led by General Luttwitz, temporarily drove Ebert's social-democratic government from the capital, (achieving the first brief triumph of the swastika, which some units took as their emblem).[4] It was immediately contained by the large response to the general strike called by the social-democratic leadership. Initially, the leaders of the KPD opposed the strike, calling for the overthrow of Ebert's government (remembering to denounce Kapp's *putschists* as well); only as communist workers later joined the strike, with the leaders of the *coup* on the point of fleeing, did the Communist Party leadership shift. The Soviet press went further. *Izvestiya* of 15 March (two days after the *putsch*) urged German workers not to " raise a finger " in response to the call for a general strike. " To the working class both the constitutional government and a dictatorship by the generals are only different political forms of economic autocracy by the bourgeoisie." Military dictatorship, as subjection to the White generals had been for Russians, would be a " hard, bloody but efficacious " school for the masses, bringing nearer the moment of communist victory. *Pravda* added on 17 March that Kapp and his fellow-conspirators had actually arranged the whole affair in advance with Ebert and the social-democratic leaders. Radek, assessing from Moscow the longer-term international implications of the *putsch* when its success still seemed likely, noted that the rule of Rightist officers fervently opposed

[4] H. J. Gordon, *The Reichswehr and the German Republic* (Princeton, 1967), p. 116; Ruth Fischer, *Stalin and German Communism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), p. 122.

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to Versailles would mean, quite obviously, " an enormous improvement in her international position "[5] for the Soviet Union.

The only serious fighting took place after Kapp and his fellow conspirators had fled. In the Ruhr, strikers—by this time including many communists—had formed a 50,000 strong " Red Army of the Ruhr," threatening to the restored (and re-organized) government. At this point, Seeckt and the General Staff intervened, answering the government's plea for help by unleashing troops (including some of the main units that had supported the *putsch*) to suppress the workers of the Ruhr. Even as the fighting was going on, Wilhelm Pieck for the Communist Party disclaimed responsibility for the " Red Army of the Ruhr "; it was led by " petty bourgeois gone wild."[6]

An essential factor in the collapse of the Kapp *putsch* was Seeckt's calculated non-participation. Had the main army command been committed, the outcome would have been very different. One result was an important shift in the balance of forces within the top levels of the military apparatus and therefore within the government as a whole: the eclipse of Ludendorff and others associated with the *putsch*, whose hostility to Bolshevism was unqualified, and the reinforcement of Seeckt and his supporters, favouring a *rapprochement* with Russia. From early 1920 onwards, Seeckt's was the most important voice in German military and foreign policy, with the dependence of civilian government on the Reichswahr starkly underlined. And Seeckt's views as he set them out to military and political circles in the first months of 1920 were by no means anti-Soviet. He accepted Weimar as a façade behind which German military power was to be rebuilt. For Germany to escape from the cage imposed by Versailles, Russia's help was indispensable. Within Germany, he explained in a letter of January 1920, he was " ready to form a wall against Bolshevism." Externally, however, he held that a " future political and economic close understanding with Great Russia " must be " an immovable goal of policy." " I refuse to support Poland [in the Soviet-Polish dispute] even at the risk that Poland will be devoured. On the contrary, I count on it, and if we cannot for the time being help Russia with the re-establishment of the boundaries of her old empire, we should certainly not hamper her."

In memoranda and lectures during February 1920, Seeckt rehearsed his expectation of a Soviet-Polish war in the summer and urged that Germany's neutrality, hostile towards Poland, could and must ensure her collapse.

> To save Poland from Bolshevism—Poland, this mortal enemy of Germany, this creature and ally of France, this thief of German soil, this annihilator of German culture—for that, not a single German arm should move. And should Poland go to the devil, we should

[5] A. Ascher, " Russian Marxism and the German Revolution, 1917–1920," in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* (1966–67), VI/VII, pp. 428–29.
[6] Fischer, op. cit. p. 133.

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> help her go. Our future lies in union with Russia, whether we like the present situation or not. No other road is open to us.

Seeckt's close subordinate, Major von Boetticher, prepared a memorandum in late March, approved by Seeckt, which went further and argued that Germany's duty in a Soviet-Polish war was to save her Polish territories within the 1914 frontier.[7]

There is also a report that in July 1920 Seeckt acted on these convictions to the extent of approaching the Soviet government directly (through their representative Kopp in Berlin) with suggestions for common action " against Versailles."[8] Whether or not he established direct dealings with the Soviet government during the 1920 war, it is certain that he did so very soon afterwards, with momentous results. From January 1921, he used his position to negotiate secret but far-reaching military collaboration between the Red Army and the Reichswehr, reduced and jealousy overseen as it was by the Entente powers. German officers gave training and technical help to the Red Army, while the Soviet Union provided facilities for training German soldiers and for developing, testing and manufacturing new weapons by German firms, which were then shared between the two countries. From 1923–24, this included a poison gas factory. The rearmament of Germany began well before Rappallo (April 1922) and was heavily dependent on behind-the-scenes collaboration with the Soviet Union—the fruit of Seeckt's patient work. And Seeckt extended the political logic of Rappallo. His memorandum of September 1922 to Reich Chancellor Wirth explained that " the existence of Poland is intolerable and incompatible with Germany's vital interests. She must disappear and will do so through her own internal weakness and through Russia—with our help." Poland was even " more intolerable for Russia " than for Germany. She must therefore be destroyed by joint action. The geo-political result of such a combined action would be " the restoration of the frontier between Russia and Germany "—the frontier of 1914. This would destroy Versailles and serve as " the basis of any understanding between the two countries."[9]

When, therefore, overtures were made from Trotsky's " party " to Seeckt during the Polish war crisis of August 1920, they went—and were known to be going—to the one man in Germany who was both highly receptive and in the best position to take action.[10] But mutual overtures,

[7] Cited in Korbel, op. cit. pp. 72–75.

[8] E. Wollenberg, *The Red Army* (London, 1938), p. 236.

[9] " Germany's Attitude to the Russian Problem," 11 Sept. 1922, cited in J. Wheeler-Bennett, *The Nemesis of Power* (London, 1961), p. 136.

[10] There is useful literature on the secret Soviet-Reichswehr collaboration: see, for instance, Erickson, op. cit.; G. Castellan, *Le réarmement clandestin du Reich, 1930–1935* (Paris, 1954), and his " Reichswehr et l'Armée Rouge, 1920–1939 " in J. B. Duroselle (ed.) *Les Relations Germano-Soviétiques de 1933 à 1939* (Paris, 1954); H. W. Gatzke, " Russo-German military collaboration during the Weimar Republic," in *American Historical Review*, LXIII, 3 Apr. 1958; G. Hallgarten, " General Hans von Seeckt and Russia," in *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. XXI, March 1949; F. L. Carsten, " The Reichswehr and the Red Army, 1920–1933," *Survey*, Nos. 44–45, Oct. 1962. The initial revelations of the German socialists in 1927 are summarized in C. F. Melville, *The Russian Face of Germany* (London, 1932).

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no matter how congruent, do not amount to an agreement; they merely provide the premises. To judge how seriously the Bolsheviks took the possibility of a joint assault with Germany on Poland during 1920, we must look at their conduct of the war in more detail. One of the most significant indicators lies in their official proclamations. That of 7 May, when the Red Army had been driven far back before Pilsudski's forces, proclaimed an unqualified right of self-determination for Poland: ". . . the Soviet government will leave to the Polish nation the right to build your own life in accord with your own views. You, yourselves, Polish workers and peasants, will resolve whether you will want to maintain the existing order . . ." The Red Army would not " impose communism on you by force." But as the Red Army recovered, recapturing Kiev, this formula receded. In the " Appeal " of 16 June, the significantly different formulation appeared: " A workers' and peasants' Poland stands in no danger from the Red Army."[11] Later, as the Red Army drove into Poland, the main stress shifted further, to Tukhachevsky's promises in early July that " In the blood of the smashed Polish army, you will drown the criminal government of Pilsudski." The Red Army's official battle-cry became " Give us Warsaw!"[12] Warsaw was not, by this time, to be returned to Polish self-determination. When a Polish communist, lagging behind events, wrote in *Die Rote Fahne* that the Soviet Union would be prepared to sign an armistice even with a Rightist Poland, he was to be reproved by no less a figure than Zinoviev, head of the Comintern.[13] In fact, as early as 30 April, Trotsky's " Theses " on Poland had made it fairly clear that talk of self-determination for Poland was mainly for propaganda purposes.[14] Political directives of 21 July explained that the armistice negotiations were not seriously intended to produce peace, adding that it was " inadvisable to say openly that we shall conclude peace only with a Soviet Poland."[15]

THE question of who was to govern the " workers' and peasants' Poland," which was the only regime with which the Soviet armies would be prepared to make peace, was suggested by the political arrangements being made at the same time. The Polish Communist Party behind Pilsudski's lines, weak and disorientated, failed almost totally in rousing opposition to him. The only effective portion of the Polish Party was travelling on the heels of the Red Army. From its foundation in December 1918, the Party stood for Poland's immediate incorporation into the Soviet Socialist Republic.[16] In a striking preview of Stalin's

[11] Cited in P. S. Wandycz, *Polish-Soviet Relations, 1917–1921* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), pp. 203, 205.
[12] Ibid. p. 213.
[13] Ibid. p. 217n.
[14] Quoted in N. Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star* (London, 1972), pp. 137–39.
[15] Wandycz, op. cit. p. 221.
[16] M. K. Dziewanowski, *Poland in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1977), p. 76. and *The Communist Party of Poland* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), pp. 65–6, 76.

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action in 1938, it was wound up as an independent party by the summer of 1920. In its place, the *Polish* Bureau of the Russian Communist Party Central Committee was formed (19 July), with a staff of about 80 officials who took charge of a general mobilization of Polish communists for service at the front. As a Soviet historian put it, Polish communists simply became " an organ of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) for work among the Polish population." This Bureau's chairman (who " worked like ten men," as a colleague recalled) was the Pole Felix Dzerzhinski—a highly significant choice. Not only was Dzerzhinski one of the most determined opponents of Lenin's previous expressions of support for Polish self-determination; he was also, more notoriously, the feared head of the Cheka. He took this role with him, ordering all Polish Chekists to be transferred urgently to the Polish front under his directions, coordinating their work closely with the Red Army " Special Departments," and continually urging a reinforcement of Cheka activity in the Polish campaign.[17]

On 30 July, the Polish Bureau transformed itself into a provisional government, the Provisional Revolutionary Committee of Poland (Polrevkom) and was shortly installed in Bialystok. The membership was the same; only a switch of chairman from Dzerzhinski to Julian Marchlewski signalled the subordination of government to party body. Reading its decrees from the " Polish Socialist Soviet Republic," Polrevkom decamped west as the Red Army neared Warsaw, preparing to take its place in the capital.[18] As Walter Krivitsky, later murdered by Stalin for his sympathies with Trotsky, but in 1920 an official with Soviet Military Intelligence on the Polish front, recalled, the Polish communists " worked hand in hand with our department, and we prepared that party for action in cooperation with the Red Army." Dzerzhinski was " appointed by Moscow," and his government, " organized in anticipation of the capture of Warsaw, was moving with Tukhachevsky's staff towards the Polish capital."[19]

What place did the Bolshevik leaders foresee for Dzerzhinski's " Polish Socialist Soviet Republic " in a vanquished Poland? This question turns on two others: what support did it have from the population? And what were its borders—in particular its western borders—intended to be?

Despite the harsh conditions of the poor and the radical measures announced (nationalization of factories and land), support was at best lukewarm. It was probably greatest in its first capital, Bialystok, a city whose predominantly Jewish working class could be expected to be less nationalistically Polish than most. Crowds gathered (or were gathered) and sang the " *Internationale* " (if badly).[20] But, Dzerzhinski wrote to his

[17] See Wandycz, op. cit. pp. 215–16; Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland*, p. 92; G. Legget, *The Cheka* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 248–49.

[18] Wandycz, op. cit. p. 228 ff.

[19] W. G. Krivitsky, *I was Stalin's Agent* (London, 1939), pp. 46–48.

[20] Warren Lerner, " Attempting a Revolution from Without: Poland in 1920," in T. T. Hammond (ed.) *The Anatomy of Communist Takeovers* (New Haven, Conn., 1975), p. 101.

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wife, " one felt no power, there were no active revolutionary developments."[21] Elsewhere the Red Army was received with indifference, or, more usually, with hostility. In the rest of Poland, the scattered efforts of the communists to elicit resistance to the government and Pilsudski had negligible results; as the Red Army approached Warsaw, their fear was that the wave of " petty bourgeois chauvinism " would " completely sweep away our organization." Certainly it brought a flood of patriotic recruitment to Pilsudski's armies, which grew swiftly before the crucial battle in defence of Warsaw on 16 August.[22] And of 24,000 prisoners of war taken by the Red Army and given political indoctrination, only 239 were persuaded to serve with Soviet forces, and only 123 were recruited to the Polish (i.e. Russian) Communist Party.[23] The heavy reliance on Dzerzhinski's Cheka in the areas held by the Red Army reflects the lack of popular support. So too did Lenin's suggestions of surreptitious terror. During August, he complimented Skliansky (Trotsky's Deputy Commissar for War) on his " beautiful plan " for forays behind Polish lines. " Finish it off *together with* Dzerzhinski. Under the guise of Greens (and we will pin it on them later) we shall go forward for 10–20 versts and hang the *kulaks*, priests and landowners. Bounty: 100,000 rubles for each man hanged."[24] To " punish " Latvia and Estonia for allowing recruitment to the Polish forces, he suggested penetration across the frontier " for perhaps a verst and there hang 100–1,000 of their officials and rich men."[25] He promised equally Draconian measures in support of the communists behind Pilsudksi's lines: the shooting of 100 captured Polish officers if any communists were killed.[26]

There is no doubt that Lenin attached great importance to the political role of Dzerzhinski's " government." Notes preserved in the Trotsky archives show him demanding in late July, with the utmost urgency, that difficulties with communication be solved and that he be put in telephone or telegraph contact with Dzerzhinski.[27] In August, a special order to Tukhachevsky instructed him to use his very few aircraft to distribute the manifesto of Dzerzhinski's committee.[28] About seven million pieces of propaganda were printed for the committee/provisional government, almost a quarter of the total Soviet propaganda output in that period, but all to little effect.[29]

THE poor reception the Red Army had from the Poles was undoubtedly aggravated by the chauvinist spirit with which the Bolsheviks rallied the forces for their invasion. Military proclamations

21 Quoted in Wandycz, op. cit. p. 230.
22 Ibid. p. 218.
23 Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland*, p. 368n.
24 *Trotsky Papers*, 2 Vols. J. M. Meijer (ed.) (The Hague, 1964 and 1971), II, p. 279.
25 Ibid. II, p. 273.
26 Wandycz, op. cit. p. 230.
27 *Trotsky Papers*, II, p. 235.
28 Ibid. p. 243.
29 Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland*, p. 317n.

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and orders of the day spoke in increasingly strident terms of marching over " the corpse of White Poland " and of duty to the Soviet fatherland. At one point, Trotsky was obliged to curb the army press for its chauvinist expressions of hatred for Poles, contrasting the " innate jesuitry of the Pollacks " with the openness and honesty of the Russians. Orders to Budenny's cavalry declared candidly: " Our main and basic shortcomings are our attitude towards the population, towards the prisoners, and our anti-semitism."[30]

In April, General Alexei Brusilov, the last commander-in-chief of the Tsar's armies, had launched an appeal to tsarist officers to support the war: " Forget the wrongs you have suffered. It is now your duty to defend our beloved Russia with all your strength . . ." His appeal was given prominent space in *Pravda*, together with a welcoming response by Trotsky, and he was helped in setting up a special advisory board of former tsarist officers attached to the military command.[31] The number of former officers, previously opposed to the Bolshevik regime but now joining it, grew. As early as 1919, Trotsky had estimated that 30,000 tsarist officers had been recruited into the Red Army, of which he judged the overwhelming majority to be dependable.[32] In the summer of 1920, the decision was taken to conscript all former tsarist officers and NCOs; by 15 August, 314,000 of them were in service.[33] In the autumn of 1920, following the Polish war, Radek commented that " an elite has crystallized out of the old Tsarist officers, which is inwardly united with the Soviet government."[34]

Some reactions among the ranks of the Red Army, however, were very different. Certain units refused to attack, because they favoured only a defensive war.[35] Demoralization set in and desertions soared, as Trotsky's and Tukhachevsky's worried comments testify. From mid-May to mid-June, the XVIth Army reported over 24,000 deserters, of whom 10,000 were caught either by the army " Special Departments " or by the Cheka.[36]

In reality, the leaders in Moscow could have had few illusions. They knew their rhetoric about revolution in Poland to be empty; Dzerzhinski's mass draft of Chekists to buttress his provisional government and stiffen the Red Army was clear, although covert, recognition of this. As a Red Army commander wrote: " expectations of an outbreak of the Polish revolution could only have been seriously entertained in political offices, and only in those which were very far from the front.[37]

Since it is clear that the Bolshevik leaders did not expect a " socialist "

[30] Wandycz, op. cit. p. 231; Trotsky, *How the Revolution Armed* (London, 1981), Vol. III, p. 209.
[31] Davies, op. cit. p. 135.
[32] E. H. Carr, op. cit. p. 274.
[33] Davies, op. cit. p. 141.
[34] Carr, op. cit. p. 275.
[35] Wandycz, op. cit. p. 202.
[36] *Trotsky Papers*, II, pp. 212–13; Erickson, op. cit. p. 93; on Red Army mutinies, see Davies, op. cit. pp. 106–107, 249–50.
[37] Wandycz, op. cit. p. 231; Wollenberg, *The Red Army*, p. 144.

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Poland based on popular support to result from the war of 1920, but rather sought to impose a puppet regime, the question arises of the plans they considered for its frontiers. The Poland of 1920, guaranteed by the Versailles settlement, was made up on the west by areas of predominently, or substantially, Polish populations, which had formed part of pre-war Germany. To provide access to the sea, the " Polish corridor " (much of West Prussia and Poznania) was allocated to Poland, cutting off East Prussia (on the Baltic around Konigsberg, now Kaliningrad) from the rest of Germany. The main port at the mouth of the " Polish corridor," Danzig (Gdansk), however, being mainly German, was given separate status as a " free city " under the League of Nations; it became a centre of German nationalist agitation. The final allocation of other areas (such as Upper Silesia) was left to plebiscites, which, in some cases, also generated violent conflict between their Polish and German populations.

At that time, Poland threatened to be a substantial rival to Germany. A strong political current sought the further incorporation of East Prussia into the Polish state, and, after the drastic de-militarization imposed on Germany by the armistice and the peace settlement, the Polish army was, if anything, superior.

The Bolshevik stance towards Versailles sought to ride two horses. They denounced the settlement as iniquitous, imposed on a conquered nation by the winning imperialist powers. This allowed the KPD, in particular, to support the almost universal German wish for a " revision " of Versailles. At the same time, the Bolsheviks proclaimed Poland's right to independence and to self-determination in the form of government of the Polish state. Since Poland was largely formed of territory taken from pre-war Germany (the rest coming from the former Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires), the two attitudes were impossible to reconcile or, in the long run, even to compromise.[38] And it was easy to see that the expected Soviet conquest of Poland would sharpen the contradiction to an extreme pitch. A Red Army-imposed regime within the 1919 frontiers, lacking the support of Polish nationalism, would be extremely vulnerable to German agitation and pressure in the western borderlands. One possible solution would therefore be to do as the overture from " Trotsky's circle " to Seeckt had suggested: to cede the western borderlands back to Germany, leaving a " Soviet " government in control of a drastically reduced Polish state, whose close alliance with Soviet Russia could be militarily guaranteed. A possible variant, of course, would be incorporation into the Soviet Union, as happened to many other nations; at this time, the Bolsheviks' policy

[38] During their negotiations-cum-skirmishes with the Polish government in January 1920, a Soviet declaration over the signatures of Lenin, Trotsky and foreign affairs Commissar Chicherin found it necessary to assert explicitly " that the Soviet Government has not entered into any agreements or pacts with Germany or any other country, aimed directly or indirectly against Poland, and that the character and spirit of international policy of the Soviet authorities excluded the very possibility of similar agreements " (*Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations*, 1939–1945, Vol. 1, edited by the Sikorski Historical Institute, London, 1961, p. 2).

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towards their national and constitutional problems had not yet crystallized. If German support, or, more importantly, military aid, were used in the conquest of Poland, a solution involving partition would move from being an option to being almost a necessity. And it would have many far-reaching implications for both Russia and Germany: in effect, the demolition of the Versailles settlement, to which both Soviet and German diplomacy were committed over several years. That this option was seriously explored by Soviet leaders is not surprising in terms of *realpolitik*: success would have brought a fundamental change in their favour in the international situation at one stroke.

Such explorations were naturally highly secret. But enough information has become available to leave no doubt that they took place. As early as 8 April, while the Red Army was heavily on the defensive, the commander-in-chief (Sergei Kamenev) was ordering front commanders to prepare plans for a possible summer offensive against Poland; the general staff plan was being finalized in the second half of April.[39] On 16 April, Victor Kopp, the Soviet representative in Berlin and a close associate of Trotsky, asked Baron Ago von Maltzan (in charge of relations with the Soviet Union at the German Foreign Ministry) about the possibility of organizing a " combination between the German and Red Armies with a view to proceeding against Poland together."[40] This approach bore no direct fruit. As the Red Army invasion gathered momentum and the threat of French support for Poland grew, the most immediate Soviet goal vis-à-vis the German government became to ensure its neutrality and prevent the passage of supplies through Germany to Poland—a policy which Seeckt energetically urged. There is an unconfirmed report that during July, Seeckt took the initiative in approaching the Soviet government via Kopp, with suggestions for collaboration " against Versailles."[41] Intelligence reports to the Polish government stated that in July, Kopp was also engaged in negotiations with German nationalist circles for Freikorps action to reoccupy the disputed Polish territory in concert with the Red Army's offensive westwards.[42] He was also reported to have negotiated with an officer more directly representative of the military command, Reibnitz, a plan whereby as soon as the Red Army took Warsaw, Freikorps forces would advance into Poland as far as the 1914 frontier.[43] Revealing demonstrations took place in Upper Silesia, where Poles and Germans were locked in conflict in the run-up to the plebiscite on whether the area should go to Poland or Germany. On 16 August, in the mistaken belief that the Red Army had captured Warsaw, German nationalists gathered in the streets of Gliwice bearing banners with pictures of Lenin and Trotsky. A similar demonstration took place in Katowice.[44]

39 Erickson, op. cit. p. 86.
40 Ibid. p. 148.
41 Wollenberg, *The Red Army*, p. 236.
42 Korbel, op. cit. p. 85.
43 Carr, op. cit. p. 324. See also references in note 2, above.
44 Davies, op. cit. pp. 184–85.

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On 20 July, having received from Kopp an assurance that the Red Army would not cross the 1914 frontiers, Germany announced her neutrality. This is borne out by the directives and actions of the army itself. An order to front commanders instructed no crossing of the *former* frontier.[45] In the small town of Soldau, on German territory just inside East Prussia, Red Army officers addressed German nationalists and assured them that Polish West Prussia was to be returned to Germany.[46] Maltzan, writing to a senior colleague in the German Foreign Ministry during August, indicated that there had already been contacts (most probably he referred to those at local level) with the Soviet army during the war.[47] Germany asked for, and was allowed to send, a liaison officer to the Red Army forces near East Prussia " to advise on nationality questions."[48]

That Soviet plans in the summer of 1920 envisaged partition is also confirmed by Radek's secret report, as representative of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, to the KPD Zentrale in January 1921. Reminding his audience that " the Red Army is now one of the most important power factors," Radek outlined the Executive Committee's calculations during the Polish war: " It was believed that if we held Warsaw, there would be no further need to advance all the way to Germany. *By occupying the Corridor* [our emphasis], the German government would find itself at loggerheads with the Entente. Kopp came to Moscow at that time with a treaty draft of the German government."[49] Radek's report (and Paul Levi's reply) suggests that knowledge of the existence of negotiations aimed at Polish partition was current among German communist leaders; to his hearers, Radek represents it essentially as part of a larger Comintern strategy to precipitate a revolutionary situation in Germany, of which they were expected to take advantage.

All sources agree that there were Germans fighting with the Red Army. The disputed question is whether, as the Polish government claimed, there were large numbers in organized forces or Freikorps units, or whether, as Soviet sources maintained, it was simply a matter of large numbers of individual Germans enlisting.[50]

As far as the message from " Trotsky's circle " to Seeckt following the reverse outside Warsaw is concerned, there is no evidence that it had any immediate response. By the time it was received, the Red Army had already made a very substantial retreat, and the possibility of Seeckt arranging enough relief for them from the western border to reverse the course of the war would have been remote. When, however, Seeckt sent his own secret emissaries to Moscow in January 1921 to open the

[45] Korbel, op. cit. p. 85.
[46] Carr, op. cit. p. 327.
[47] Gatzke, op. cit. p. 567.
[48] Korbel, op. cit. pp. 87–88; Davies, op. cit. p. 184.
[49] Radek's report (28 Jan. 1921) and Levi's reply are in M. M. Drachkovitch and B. Lazitch (eds.) *The Comintern: Historical Highlights* (Stanford, 1966), pp. 285–99.
[50] Korbel, op. cit. pp. 88–89; J. K. Pilsudski, *L'Année 1920* (Paris, 1929), p. 231.

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Reichswehr-Red Army military collaboration, it was to Trotsky, via Kopp, that they went.[51]

IT is difficult to judge how far the examples recorded of collaboration " on the ground " during the Soviet-Polish war were the direct result of behind-the-scenes understanding at the time. What they do attest to is that the secret Soviet approaches were not simply diplomatic ruses, but were reflected within the local conduct of the war in steps aimed at facilitating actual collaboration.

Also difficult to judge is in what form and with what political coloration the possibility of Russian-German joint action to dismember Poland took shape in the minds of Bolshevik leaders. The element of cynical calculation on their unexpectedly rapid military advance, and the " window of opportunity " opened by the extreme reluctance of the Entente powers to become directly involved, was undoubtedly combined with enthusiasm for revolution in Poland and/or Germany—if only it would occur. Tukhachevsky's " Order of the Day " of 2 July, the eve of the main Soviet offensive, has accents of sincerity as well as confusion: " Over the corpse of White Poland shines the road to world-wide conflagration. On our bayonets we shall bring happiness and peace to toiling humanity. To the West!"[52] What is clearer is that well-placed contemporaries judged the prospect of a Russian-German alliance against Poland to be real. Millerand, the French Premier, warned " that Germany wished to profit by Poland's adversity in order to get back in the east what she had lost in the west." Churchill made similar warnings. To Eduard Benes, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, it seemed clear that " If Germany allowed Poland to be crushed, it would mean a prior understanding with the Bolshevik government and the beginning of a Russo-German Alliance."[53] In the Reichstag, the German Chancellor Fehrenbach publicly criticized those who had watched the advance of the Red Army " with feverish sympathy," and expressed relief that the country was not " misled into intervening in the Russo-Polish war."[54]

A number of statements by the Bolshevik leaders themselves acknowledge that it was conquest rather than revolution that was at stake in the summer of 1920. For example, in a long ruminative speech on 2 October, Lenin cogitated aloud on the Polish débâcle to an audience of leather workers' delegates. The crucial factors were the balance of military forces, and the patriotism of the Poles:

> By the time our troops had got within reach of Warsaw, they were too exhausted to press home the victory, whereas the Polish troops, supported by a wave of patriotism in Warsaw, and with a feeling (*sic*!) that they were now on their own soil, found encouragement

51 *Trotsky Papers*, II, pp. 441–43.

52 Quoted in Davies, op. cit. p. 145.

53 L. Kochan, *The Struggle for Germany* (Edinburgh, 1963), pp. 104–105n. Lloyd George's representative in Warsaw at the climax of the war, Sir Maurice Hankey, expected a similar outcome (R. H. Ullman, *Anglo-Soviet Relations 1917–1921*, Vol. III (Princeton, 1972), p. 199).

54 Freund, op. cit. p. 78.

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> and a fresh opportunity to advance. The war, as it turned out, had enabled us almost to rout Poland completely, but at the decisive moment our strength failed us.

Had they reached Warsaw, the intention was to " hand over power to the Warsaw workers, *convene* (our emphasis) Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies in Warsaw, and say to them, ' We have come to your aid.'" The " international significance " of the war lay in Versailles, and " one of the reasons why this monstrous peace holds together is the fact that Poland divides Germany into two halves." The Versailles system is " oppressing hundreds of millions of people," is reducing Germany " to an unparalleled and unprecedented state of servitude," and has " turned Poland into a buffer state which is to guard against German contact with Soviet communism." Suggesting that the Versailles settlement had made the Germans a colonial people, Lenin averred that the Soviet republic was the " only force in the world which is combating imperialism—and imperialism now means an alliance of France, Britain and America."[55] Addressing the All-Russian Congress of Soviets in December 1920, he drew out the lessons of the Polish war even more concretely. Germany's conditions under Versailles " make her existence impossible." As the Red Army approached Warsaw:

> all Germany was seething. An alliance between Russia and Germany, a country that has been strangled, a country that is able to set gigantic production forces in motion—this situation has led to a political mix-up in Germany: the German Black Hundreds sympathise with the Russian Bolsheviks in the same way as the Spartacus League does. This can well be understood because it derives from economic causes, and it is the basis of the entire economic situation *and of our foreign policy* (our emphasis).[56]

[55] Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 300 ff.; see also Wandycz, op. cit. p. 219.

[56] Ibid. p. 477. Lenin alludes here to " national Bolshevism." This hybrid derived from two distinct sources: the radical German Right, and trends within the German far Left. Whilst always remaining distinguishable the two currents flowed together when tensions rose between Germany and the Versailles powers. Both advocated " revolutionary war " to avenge the defeat of 1918 and recover Germany's lost territories, west and east. This objective was to be furthered domestically by a political combination of the Left, and the nationalist middle classes and the armed forces on the Right, while internationally, Germany would strike against Poland through a military as well as diplomatic alliance with Russia; both ingredients are evident in Lenin's speech. Rightist " national Bolshevism " was represented typically by Count Reventelow, who, after years of flirtation with North German radical Nazis finally joined the Party in 1927. Reventelow, an enthusiastic propagator of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, demanded German military support for Russia at the time of the Red Army's invasion of Poland. Radek, while sometimes chiding German communists for too readily associating with such figures, grasped their value as a means of extending communist influence and as a lever of Soviet foreign policy. It was courtesy of Radek that Reventelow appeared as a guest writer in the communist press. (In the 1923 crisis, Radek was to write in *Die Rohte Fahne* that " even with the people who murdered Liebknecht and Luxemburg we shall make common cause.") (A. Spencer, " National Bolshevism," in *Survey*, Nos. 44–45, Oct. 1962, pp. 141-42.) Nor were leading Nazis 100 per cent anti-Soviet then: Hitler told a Salzburg rally in the critical month of August 1920 that he would rather be hanged in a Bolshevik Germany than in a French Germany (W. Laqueur, " Hitler and Russia, 1919–1923," in *Survey*, Nos. 44–45, Oct. 1962, p. 94). The associations of Radek, as the Comintern official with primary responsibility for the KDP, accorded with certain calculations on the part of his seniors. A speech by Lenin a month after the Red Army's defeat outside Warsaw explained that ". . . our advance on Warsaw has had such a powerful effect on Western Europe and on the entire world situation that it has profoundly changed the alignment of the struggling internal and external political forces. Our

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Another speech of the same period (expunged from authorized versions of his works) spelled out the foreign policy implications.

> I am not fond of Germans by any means, but at the present time it is more advantageous to use them than to challenge them. An independent Poland is very dangerous to Soviet Russia: it is an evil which, however, at the present time also has its redeeming features; for while it exists, we may safely count on Germany, because the Germans hate Poland and will at any time make common cause with us in order to strangle Poland. . . . Everything teaches us to look upon Germany as our most reliable ally.[57]

In 1924, Trotsky reviewed their attempt to put Poland to the test " with the bayonet." The initiative was Lenin's: " The boldness of Lenin's thought in the idea of the Warsaw advance was remarkable. The risk was great, but the goal was greater. The chance of the plan's failing involved no danger for the existence of the Soviet Republic itself, but only a weakening." Trotsky regretted its failure, but was unrepentant—and revealing—about its goals. The effect of the peace of Riga (the settlement at the end of the Polish-Soviet war), was to " cut us off from Germany." For the Soviet Union's wider action in 1923—the political crisis in Germany produced by French occupation of the Ruhr—this was crucial: " The counter-revolutionary significance of the Riga treaty for the fate of Europe can best be understood if you picture the situation in 1923 under the supposition we had had a common frontier with Germany."[58]

THE Bolshevik leaders took the Polish war as an important case of the general strategy of expansion by military conquest. The Second Congress of the Comintern met in Moscow in late July—early August 1920, and Zinoviev described how:

> In the congress hall hung a great map on which was marked every day the movement of our armies. And the delegates every morning stood with breathless interest before this map. It was a sort of symbol: the best representatives of the international proletariat with breathless interest, with palpitating heart, followed every advance of our armies.[59]

Tukhachevsky, the chief commander, was one of the main enthusiasts for " revolution from without." His letter in July to the Comintern

army's close approach to Warsaw has incontestably shown that the centre of world imperialism's entire system, which rests on the Treaty of Versailles, lies somewhere very close to the Polish capital. Poland, the last anti-Bolshevik stronghold fully controlled by the Entente, is such an important element in that system that when the Red Army threatened that stronghold, the entire structure was shaken. The Soviet Republic has become a major factor in world politics. . . . All Germany began to seethe when our forces approached Warsaw. In that country a situation arose very much like that which could be seen in Russia in 1905, when the Black Hundreds aroused and involved in political life large and most backward sections of the peasantry, which were opposed to the Bolsheviks one day, and on the next were demanding all the land from the landed proprietors. In Germany too, we have a similar unnatural bloc between the Black Hundreds and the Bolsheviks." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 276.)

57 *Ost-Information* (Berlin), No. 81, 4 Dec. 1920, cited in A. L. P. Dennis, *The Foreign Policies of Soviet Russia* (New York, 1924), pp. 154–55.

58 Trotsky, *Lenin* (London, 1925), pp. 140–41.

59 Quoted in Carr, op. cit. p. 192.

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Congress proposed the immediate creation of an international general staff for the Red Army, to wage the forthcoming " international civil war " for Europe.[60] Defeat outside Warsaw did nothing to alter this basic perspective. His lectures to the Moscow Military Academy in 1923, assessing the Polish war, greatly exaggerated the extent of revolutionary ferment at the time in Poland and in Western Europe. At the same time, Tukhachevsky made it clear that this was a subordinate factor in the strategy for " exporting the revolution."

> What was the condition of the proletariat in western Europe? Was it prepared for revolution? Could it have supported and added vitality to the socialist avalanche (i.e. the Red Army advance) which was rushing onward from the east, bringing freedom in its train? . . . the answer to this question was definitely in the affirmative.[61]

Inverting the usual Marxist link between war and revolution, Tukhachevsky cited as evidence of this revolutionary temper the willingness of the population to join the Red Army *after* it had conquered an area (" class reinforcement ")—at least in Byelorussia and East Prussia! The failure to organize any substantial *Polish* units in 1920 he attributed to poor organization; more generally, " The essential conclusion to be drawn from our campaign of 1920 is that its loss was due not to political but strategic factors," especially " the inadequate training of commanding officers for their duties."

An interesting postscript to Tukhachevsky's misdiagnosis from " on top," which underlines the common ground of Bolshevik attitudes towards the military expansion of the Soviet state, was provided by Trotsky's comments on the Stalin-Hitler Pact and partition of Poland in 1939. Without mentioning his own authorship of the 1920 partition schemes, he supported, as " progressive," the nationalizations carried out in the areas annexed by the Soviet Union, making a direct parallel with his and Lenin's strategy for Poland and other countries in 1918–21: " The proletarian revolution, which occurred on the territory of the Czarist empire, attempted from the very beginning to conquer and for a time conquered the Baltic countries; attempted to penetrate Rumania and Persia and at one time led its armies up to Warsaw " (1920). Military expansionism as such, Trotsky emphasized, has nothing to do with the Soviet Union's " degeneration " under Stalin:

> Even a sound workers' state would tend towards expansion, and the geographical lines would inevitably coincide with the general lines of the Czarist expansion, because revolutions don't ordinarily change geographical conditions. What we object to about the Kremlin is not the expansion and not the geographical direction of the expansion

[60] Reprinted in Erickson, *The Soviet High Command*, Appendix 1.

[61] " March beyond the Vistula " reprinted in J. K. Pilsudski, *Year 1920* (New York, 1972), pp. 241–44, 263–64. The paragraphs on " Exporting the revolution " are omitted from the Russian and Polish editions of Tukhachevsky's writings published in 1964 after his posthumous rehabilitation.

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but the bureaucratic, counter-revolutionary methods of the expansion."[62]

There is a convergence among the reflections of leading participants: they tend to confirm that, if the Bolshevik armies had triumphed in 1920, Poland would have vanished from the map 19 years before it did.

62 Trotsky, *In Defence of Marxism* (New York, 1976), pp. 23, 26.

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Polish Communists, 1937–44

Cezary Baryka

BEFORE concentrating on the period during which the Polish communists were left without a party of their own, we should try to find out more about the KPP (Polish Communist Party), looking at its political, social and cultural role in the country's life and at the influence it had between the two world wars.

Little serious work has been done on the subject. Before the war, an *Historia KPP* was published under the pseudonym of Jan Alfred Regula in 1933 (2nd. edn., 1934). It is thought that the author was P. Demant, an investigating magistrate specializing in communist affairs. The work, based on the documentation of conferences, meetings, congresses and resolutions of the Party Central Committee Plenums, was conceived as an instrument of propaganda and instruction. Its aim was to prove that the KPP played one and only one role: that of agent of the USSR and its great power politics. The author appeared well-informed and aware of the inner problems and struggles within the Party. His assessment of the personalities of leaders such as Vera Kostrzewa (Maria Koszutska), whom he presented as a brave woman, and of many other Party luminaries, whose cowardice, shiftiness and careerism he pointed out, struck a true note. Despite its bias, it remains a valuable source. Two books published in the United States since the war, M. K. Dziewanowski's *The Communist Party of Poland* (1959) and J. B. de Weydenthal's *The Communists of Poland* (1978) are both sketchy outlines rather than in-depth analyses.

In Poland, the subject has been carefully ignored since 1945. After all, the KPP had been excommunicated despite being a predecessor of the ruling Party. It was a difficult dilemma. The PPR cut itself off from the KPP tradition. However, after the 20th Congress of the USSR Communist Party had rehabilitated the leaders of the KPP, who nearly 20 years earlier had been shot or had perished in Soviet prisons, their portraits appeared unexpectedly among those of other leaders at the May Day celebrations of 1956. The decision of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, which ordered the KPP to be disbanded in 1938 because of the supposed penetration of the leadership by *agents provocateurs*, was declared to have been wrong. It seemed, therefore, that the road was open for an objective study of the subject. But it proved difficult to abandon the magic circle of anti-KPP accusations: accusations of "Luxemburgism," "adventurism," "rightist opportunism," "the May error," "the sectarian struggle," "the erroneous theories of social fascism." How was the decision to liquidate the Party at the very moment when it had been restored to orthodoxy by the resolutions of its Fifth Plenum of February 1937 (just before Stalin's ominous speech on

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Trotskyism at the March 1937 Plenum of the Soviet Party) to be explained? Perhaps this was the reason behind the continued silence. No one has, so far, used source material to answer this question. On the other hand it was impossible to write a true history of the KPP without first subjecting to critical analysis the history of the Comintern itself. KPP had been an obedient branch of the Comintern, certainly since the so-called " bolshevization," i.e. at least since 1929, if not since 1924 and the Fifth Congress of the Comintern when the Polish Section was presided over by Stalin. In fact, one treatment of the subject has been published, a three-volume work by Jozef Kowalski, steering a middle course between the current Party line and the views of its actual leader on the one hand, and the requirements of historical integrity on the other.[1] As a result, the most honest of his works is the latest, *Komunistyczna Partia Polski 1935–1938. Studium historyczne* (1975), written after the author had been dismissed in 1968 from the post of deputy head of the Department of Party History at the Party Central Committee, and reminded that his original surname was Natanson. Since then he has abandoned the political ambition which used to fill his life and has devoted himself exclusively to academic and research work. My essay relies to a large degree on Kowalski's findings.

In the earlier volumes, Kowalski devoted much attention and space to vilifying the Polish socialist movement and especially the PPS (Polish Socialist Party). The latest book concentrates on the KPP. Inevitably, the work ran into trouble with the censors who insisted on considerable cuts, particularly in the last chapter, concerned as it was with the liquidation of the KPP. Obviously the subject is still taboo. Another historian, Marian Malinowski, was made to remove the first chapter of his work *Geneza PPR* (1972 and 1975) which dealt with the same period. It seems that the censors decided it was more than enough to have allowed Malinowski to publish the material in periodical form, in the quarterly *Z Pola Walki*.[2] Hardly worth remembering, except perhaps as a sign of the times, was a pamphlet by H. Rechowicz on the history of the KPP, written on the instructions of the ruling team of the time under Gierek. Incidentally, Rechowicz has recently been sentenced to three years' imprisonment for his part in an embezzlement at Slask University. In the past, he distinguished himself as a hagiographer of Boleslaw Bierut, also on Gierek's instructions. Of course none of this was historical research but a sad example of treating history as a politician's *Mädchen für Alles*.

The three works to which I referred in the beginning (that is Regula, Dziewanowski and de Weydenthal) have one thing in common: they seek to prove that the KPP was a party totally divorced from society, the working class, the peasants and the intelligentsia; that it did not count at all, either ideologically or politically; that it was a marginal organization

[1] J. Kowalski, *Zarys historii polskiego ruchu robotniczego w latach 1918–39*. Cz. 1 Lata 1918–29 (Wyd.Ilgie, 1962) and *Trudne lata: problemy rozwoju poskiego ruchu robotniczego 1929–35* (1966).

[2] Marian Malinowski, " Przyczynek do sprawy rozwiazam a KPP," in *Z Pola Walki*, No. 3, 1968.

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of no importance, with a membership of a few thousand, irrelevant to Polish life and devoid of influence; that it was rightly made illegal as it was opposed to the existence of an independent Polish state; that it was controlled by " alien " and therefore hostile elements, i.e. the Jews; and that it was, both objectively and subjectively, only a tool of Stalin, used by the USSR and its organ, the Comintern, to promote their own interests. Thus Polish Communists were presented as a foreign element in the Polish body politic, and were declared absent from Polish history.

Such an assumption, of course, makes it easier to prove the intended point but it does not help to elucidate the complicated political, social and national situation. Indeed it is likely to make it more obscure. Before the war, that standpoint was a dogma subscribed to by the lower echelons of the police in a country no longer democratic, especially since the *coup* of May 1926. A country which in fact became an authoritarian state, sympathetic to Mussolini's Italy and linked by a treaty with Hitler's Germany, whose example was emulated when an isolation camp, modelled on Dachau, was opened in Bereza Kartuska; the parliamentary system was being destroyed, anti-semitism was encouraged, and freedom of speech restricted. But the higher echelons of the administration, the Political Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the voevodas, regarded the KPP in a different light. To them it was a genuine opponent to be taken seriously. It was, after all, the strongest of the illegal communist parties in Europe, commanding support among all social classes. By then, there was hardly a trace left of the German Communist Party, at one time the strongest of them all.

The " Sanacja " administration saw the reason for the continuing survival of the KPP, despite police repression, and for its influence, not in external factors (Comintern money and Comintern agents), but in the country's internal situation. Its constant elements were structural unemployment, universal poverty in both towns and villages, underdevelopment in industry and agriculture, elitist tendencies in education and cultural life. The more enlightened and liberal among the " Sanacja " establishment saw the reason for the influence of communism in the political monopoly methodically built up by the ruling party, the oppression of the Ukrainians and Byelorussians who were being deprived of civil rights, and lack of prospects for university students and for those who were unable to study because the fees in the institutions of higher education were exorbitant.

These were the reasons—objective reasons—behind the repeated resurgence of the Party, pushed underground only two months after Poland regained its independence, persecuted by the police, decimated by arrests (the political life of an underground activist was, on average, six months), hated by the political Right, excommunicated by the Church, distrusted by the leadership of the socialist and peasant parties. Those who draw attention to its restricted membership forget that numbers in an illegal party should not be compared with those in a legal organization. Before the war, the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), although

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legal, was not a mass movement. Its membership stood at around 35,000. The membership of the illegal KPP (including the Ukrainian and the Byelorussian parties and the youth organization KZMP) was in the region of 12,000 to 14,000, not a negligible figure, but yet to be topped by the ever-increasing number of political prisoners. The numerically strongest party was " Stronnictwo Ludowe " with a membership of 100,000 or so. But Poland was an agricultural country; nearly two-thirds of the population earned its living in agriculture. In 1938 less than 900,000 people were employed in industry; there were 400,000 unemployed. The KPP was fundamentally a workers' party, although many of its members were peasants, especially among the ethnic minorities, Ukrainians and Byelorussians. The authoritarian ruling group failed to solve social problems, yet it refused to share power with the majority which opposed it.

WHAT were the views of the intelligentsia? Many educated people in Europe were fascinated by the Soviet " revolution," and the development of heavy industry at a time of economic depression in the rest of Europe and the United States. They remained ignorant of the cost of the early five-year plans. They were impressed by the military power of the USSR, until 1935 the greatest in Europe, and by its artistic achievements: film, represented by Pudovkin and Eisenstein, the theatre of Meyerhold, the music of Shostakovich and Prokofiev. French writers such as Romain Rolland, Anatole France, and Henri Barbusse, and German writers such as Bertold Brecht and Heinrich Mann, were strongly influenced by communist ideology.

Poland was no exception. The phenomenon cannot be explained in terms of the police definition of the KPP as being exclusively an agent of Moscow. Neither the size of the membership, nor the number of Jews in the leadership of the party can explain the part played by the KPP in the pre-war political life of the country, whether among the workers in the industrial centres of Warsaw, Lodz and the Dabrowa Basin, or in agricultural regions such as northern Mazowsze, southern Lublin, and above all Ukrainian Volhynia and the Byelorussian regions around Wilno and Baranowicze. Nor can it explain the influence exerted over the Polish intelligentsia, artists, and academics by communist ideas.

Stefan Zeromski included a portrait of a communist in his novel *Przedwiosnie* (1925). Not enough has been said about the fact that the most influential writer of the time, who educated the young in social concerns and led many of them towards socialist ideas, used arguments from the illegally printed party pamphlets to express criticism of the conditions prevailing in his country. In *Przedwiosnie*, the woman doctor who speaks at a secret meeting of a communist cell, repeats, almost verbatim, a speech made in court by Dr Czeslawa Grosserowa, one of the accused in the so-called " St. George's trial " which took place in Lwow in 1922. Another character in the novel describes the torture of political prisoners; again, Zeromski took the details from a KPP publication.

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And Zeromski was by no means unique. We should also remember Andrzej Strug and Emil Zegadlowicz, and such writers and critics as Andrzej Stawar, Aleksander Wat, Czeslaw Milosz, Helena Boguszewska, Wladyslaw Broniewski, Bruno Jasienski, and St. Ryszard Stande, Witold Wandurski, Jozef Lobodowski. There were also radical populists among the peasant writers: Marian Czuchnowski, Wojciech Skuza, Marian Kubicki; the Byelorussian poets Maksym Tank and Filip Piestrak; the Ukrainians Stepan and Aleksander Hawryluk, the translator of Upton Sinclair, Antonina Sokolicz. There were outstanding academics: sociologist Stefan Czarnowski (a student of Emile Durkheim), philosopher Stefan Rudnianski, educationalist Wladyslaw Spasowski, physicist Stanislaw Kalinowski, geographer B. Nowakowski, mathematician Rajchman, historian Natalia Gasiorowska-Grabowska, the promising philologist Salomon Jaszunski, killed in Spain, the young painters Kazimierz Gede, also killed in Spain, and Franciszek Bartoszek and Zygmunt Bobrowski, both killed in Warsaw in 1943 during an underground raid. There was the film-maker Aleksander Ford, the talented historian Eugeniusz Przybyszewski, son of the writer Stanislaw Przybyszewski, and the promising physicist, student of Marie Curie and son of one of Pilsudski's associates in the Underground, Jedrzejewski. Both Przybyszewski and Jedrzejewski perished during the purges in the USSR. A brother of Bronislaw Huberman, the famous violinist, was a member of the KPP. A number of the Polish intelligentsia were to be found among followers of the KPP and its political initiatives in the struggle against fascism; and some were even Party members.

Polish communists were defended in court by many brilliant lawyers, ready to stand up for their clients' legal right to act according to their political convictions. Among them were: in Lwow, Landau and Axer, in Cracow, Aniela Steinsberg, in Warsaw, Kazimierz Sterling, Waclaw Barcikowski, Waclaw Szumanski, and Theodor Duracz. Among the leaders of the PPS, Kazimierz Czapinski, Zygmunt Zulawski and Zygmunt Zareba were of the opinion that the KPP should be allowed to return to a legal existence. In their view, the political map of Poland (as much as that of France or Czechoslovakia) was not complete without the communists, who should not have been made to suffer long-term imprisonment for their political convictions. The socialists were fully aware that the danger to other parties, which could also be declared illegal, was very real and that it could lead to a one-party state as happened in Hitler's Germany. The ruling, " Oboz Zjednoczenia Narodowego " had been consistently moving in that direction since 1937.

Charges of demagogy, adventurism and utopian thinking can be levelled against the KPP, with its tactical about-turns, its damaging and absurd slogans, constantly dictated by the Comintern and its Congresses (particularly the Sixth Congress in 1928). Nonetheless, the KPP's very existence put life into other parties of the Left whose leaders might otherwise have been inclined to compromise with the authorities. Polish

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workers who went on strike for wage increases, peasants fighting for the return from exile of their leader Wincenty Witos, for free elections and agricultural reform, the intelligentsia struggling for freedom of speech and association, all of these were able to rely on communist support, whether we choose to regard it as a service to the Soviet Union or devotion to the interests of their own country.

Artificially to restrict our field of observation (political, social and cultural) to an analysis of fragmentary and out-of-context detail, such as the figures concerning the number of Jews in the KPP Central Committee, is counter-productive to increasing our understanding. It creates obstacles to an understanding not only of the past, but also of the present with its deeply-buried roots.

The Liquidation of the KPP leadership in the USSR (1937)

The process of the liquidation of the leadership of the KPP, KPZU (Communist Party of Western Ukraine), KPZB (Communist Party of Western Byelorussia), KZMP (Communist Association of Polish Youth), and of the associated organizations: the NPC (Independent Peasant Party), the Byelorussian " Hromada," and the Ukrainian " Sel-Rob " started up long before the Great Purge in the Soviet Union; in fact as early as 1933. Among the members of the KPP Central Committee arrested and executed in the USSR at that time, were those who had left the PPS for the KPP in the early 1920s: Tadeusz Zarski and his wife Zofia Maciejewska, Jerzy Czeszejko-Sochacki, the secretary of the KPZB Central Committee Jozef Lohinowicz-Korczyk, KZMP leaders Ignacy Tom-Lasocki and Mieczyslaw Kniewski (brother of Wladyslaw, shot in Warsaw in 1925), the founder of the NPC Sylwester Wojewodzki, the ex-member of the Seym, where he represented the Byelorussian " Hromada," Boleslaw Taraszkiewicz and another old parliamentarian Jozef Hawrylik who stood for the Ukrainian " Zmahania." Soon afterwards, " Albert " (Wiktor Zytlowski) published an article " At the source of PoW provocation " in the organ of the CC KPP, *Nowy Przeglad.* The article, based on materials supplied, undoubtedly, by the GPU, accused the KPP leaders (already imprisoned and probably executed) of practising subversion within the KPP. The author could not at the time suspect that, a few years later, he was going to be accused of the same crime. It seems that the first wave of arrests was linked to the Great Purge taking place at that time in Soviet Ukraine, where Skrypnik committed suicide, a new leadership was installed, Kiev replaced Kharkov as the capital city of the Ukraine and the republic's autonomy was restricted. At the same time, the Polish autonomous region Marchlewsk was liquidated and its inhabitants were moved to an area near the Korean frontier. This was the first mass deportation of Poles. The repressions were the outcome of enforced collectivization, with millions of people dying through famine, and the deportation of *kulaks* to Siberia. This was the true balance, the real cost of Dneprostroy, the Donets Basin and the

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development of heavy industry in the Ukraine. The Polish communist leaders, who had links with Western Ukraine, fell victim to the purge.

The second wave of purges started in 1936, at the time of the introduction of Stalin's "most democratic constitution." The first to be arrested were the founders of the KPP, members of the so-called " majority " group which existed between 1926 and 1929 and was now declared to have been a rightist deviation. They were removed from the leadership of the Party and sent to work in nondescript Soviet institutions, or else were left to starve. Among other leaders, organizers and theoreticians so treated were Maria Koszutska, known as Wera Kostrzewa, Adolf Warski-Warszawski who had been a leader of the communist faction of the Seym and, at the time, was living with Felix Dzerzhinski's widow Zofia, who was residing in the Kremlin; Maksymilian Horwitz-Walecki and Aleksander Danieluk-Stefanski, both working for the Comintern. Also communist members of the Seym: Tomasz Dabal, Stefan Krolikowski, Stanislaw Lancucki, Henryk Bittner, Jan Hempel, who was the formative influence in Boleslaw Bierut's political development, and many more. It was thought at the time that they may have been " guilty " of disagreeing with Stalin or Manuilski, of belonging to the opposition factions, defending Trotsky or, later, Bukharin.

They were soon followed (between June and September 1937) by the remaining members of the Central Committee, the Politburo and the Secretariat. It did not matter whether they were living in the USSR or in the West, in France, Spain, Czechoslovakia or in Poland. They were all called to Moscow in order to " explain " their loyalty to the Comintern. Only those in Polish prisons were safe. The first to be arrested were the CC members then living in the USSR: Saul Amsterdam-Henrykowski, Franciszek Grzelszczak-Grzegorzewski, Wiktor Zytlowski, and the head of the Polish Section of the Comintern's Executive Committee Bronislaw Bronkowski-Bortnowski. The following members of the Politburo living abroad, were summoned to Moscow: from Paris, KPP Secretary-General and member of the Presidium of the Comintern's Executive Committee Julian Lenski-Leszczynski, and the head of the Central Foreign Editorial Committee, an outstanding theoretical economist, Jerzy Ryng; from Prague, Stanislaw Mertens-Skulski and Edward Prochniak. Finally, in September 1937, the last remaining member of the Politburo and the Polish representative in the Comintern, Jan Paszyna (" Czarny ") was summoned. Thus the whole of the Politburo was liquidated. Kazimierz Cichowski (" Hrabia "), the Comintern representative with the International Brigades and a member of the CC, was summoned from Spain, as was the representative of the KPP with the Spanish Party, Gustaw Reicher-Rawal. The National Secretariat in Poland was headed by Antoni Lipski (" Zdzich "). In the autumn of 1937, Lipski left Warsaw for Prague in order to find out what was happening and why the liaison with Paris and Moscow had broken down. He was called to the USSR early in 1938. The two remaining members of the

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Secretariat, Jan Lubiniecki-Rylski and Romana Wolf-Jezierska, followed. Before leaving the country, Lipski decided to place the affairs of the Secretariat in the hands of his brother Leon (pseudonym " Lukasz "). The brothers came from a miner's family in Dabrowa Basin, with a tradition of communist affiliation.

THE Great Purge, or rather the Great Terror in the USSR between 1936 and 1938, cost, it is estimated, about seven million lives, over a million of them members of the ruling Party. The Great Terror spread to the Comintern: Bela Kun, the leader of the Hungarian revolution, and Gorkic, the secretary of the Yugoslav CC, both perished. The Baltic Parties were liquidated by means of a simple device which avoided formal disbanding: their leaders were executed. The fate of Polish communists was particularly tragic: not only were they murdered, but their memory was desecrated. They were described as *agents provocateurs*, subversives, police agents. The Party was formally liquidated. After the protagonists had been arrested and most probably executed, it was time for the next act. The communist organization in Poland had to be told. Until then, they knew nothing, and in their illegal press, tried to refute the news published in the official *Gazeta Polska* and the socialist *Robotnik* about the arrests of the KPP leaders in the USSR. The communist *Czerwony Sztandar* condemned the news as " reactionary lies " and " provocation." Anxiety grew, kindled by a breakdown of liaison, lack of funds and the Comintern's silence, but the Party still functioned: subscriptions were collected, money-raising activities were organized, proclamations and the Party paper, *Czerwony Sztandar*, were published regularly. *Czerwony Sztandar* was in fact published every fortnight between September and December 1937, more frequently than in the earlier part of the year.

The January 1938 issue of the Comintern paper published in Russian and German carried, under the pseudonym J. Sviencickii, an article entitled " *Agents Provocateurs* at Work," described as a correspondence from Warsaw. The KPP leaders (most of them dead by then, in all probability) were charged with crimes of penetrating the KPP for the purpose of subversion, of working for the Polish police, of undermining the credibility of the Party and handing their own comrades over to the police.

Strictly speaking, the article is the only statement about the whole issue published at the time. It was not known in Poland until the spring of 1938. However, rumours were circulating and anxiety grew. After Lipski's departure for Prague, there came into being a " Circle of Instructors " which issued statements without authority from the Central Committee. Its members were Leon Holzer (" Wladek "), arrested in December 1937, Wlodzimierz Zawadzki (" Jasny ") and Leon Lipski (" Lukasz "). " Lukasz " decided to enlarge the group and to turn it into the provisional Directorate of the KPP by coopting three more people: Edward Uzdanski as editor-in-charge, Helena Grudowa,

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who was to be responsible for aid to political prisoners and contacts with the Byelorussian communists, and Stanislaw Radkiewicz, then KPP secretary of Lodz region and minister of Public Security from 1944–54. Lipski himself looked after the trade unions in the building, metal, textile and mining industries, where the communists had influence. He also coordinated the work of the Directorate. Wlodzimierz Zawadzki kept in touch with the KZMP and KPZU. In Warsaw, a number of the provisional leadership published proclamations as well as *Czerwony Sztandar*, in which they expressed their own view of the current political problems; these included a teachers' strike, the formation of Democratic Clubs, an attempt on the life of Adam Koc, (a leader of the ruling Polish Party), the PPS memorandum sent to the President of the Republic, Polish threats to Lithuania, the dangerous situation in Czechoslovakia, and the Anschluss. The communists continued to have talks with the PPS and the trade unions, and with two peasant parties; they also maintained contact with the regional and area organization. In fact, the Party continued and its leader " Lukasz " was actively considering the idea of a national congress to be called for May, or else a national council with the authority to elect a new Central Committee.

However, everything had already been set in motion to prevent these plans from coming to fruition. The Party was finally to be liquidated. The provisional leadership, as if ignorant of the real situation, exceeded its authority. They sent an official communication to the PPS Council and signed it " Central Committee KPP." At the end of April 1938 they issued a proclamation for 1 May, telling the membership to take part in the demonstration. The provisional leadership was apparently of the opinion that the Party's conduct should be decided by the Party and not by external forces.

The Liquidation of the KPP in Poland

The external forces worked through the Communist International. The Polish Party was to be told that it had already been dissolved and that it had no authority to continue. A few soldiers of the Dabrowski Brigade and erstwhile members of the KPP (S. Duchlinski, P. Kartin and C. Szraga) were dispatched from Spain to the French Communist Party with instructions to inform it of the demise of the Polish Party. They were also ordered to summon to Paris some of the Polish activists known to them personally. We know only one by name: Marceli Skornik, who came from Poland for consultation, but there were others. They were told by the representatives of the Comintern that the Polish Party had ceased to exist. A Comintern agent " Jean " (a Bulgarian known also as " Kozarinov " and " Bogdanov ") played the main role in these conversations. The emissaries were then instructed to go back to Poland without getting in touch with the provisional leadership and to convey the information verbally, without committing anything to paper. They were to tell the Party organization at grass-roots level that it had been

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disbanded. The emissaries arrived in Poland during April and May 1938, keeping their arrival secret from the provisional leadership. Their mission proved thoroughly ineffective: no one believed them, and they were unable to show any proof of authority. The provisional leadership finally found out about the orders. The May issue of *Czerwony Sztandar*, which was to be the last, carried a bad Polish translation of the January article by " Sviencickii (" *Agents Provocateurs* at Work "). Leon Lipski firmly opposed the order to disband. He was sent " on leave " and his post was taken over by Wlodzimierz Zawadzki (" Jasny "), who was to be " a coordinator " of the provisional leadership. Lipski refused to surrender to pressure and he continued to defend the good name of the KPP leadership against the slanderous abuse hurled at them. In June 1938 Lipski printed (on the *Czerwony Sztandar* press) an appeal to the Party membership to disregard the rumours of liquidation and to continue working. Excerpts from it were published in the socialist (PPS) *Robotnik* of 5 July under the title " The fate of Polish communism." Five years later Leon Lipski was shot in a Warsaw street by members of the communist underground who had been told to deal with this " Gestapo agent." Thus Lipski paid with his life for his independence and loyalty to the ideology betrayed by his comrades, and for disobeying the orders from Moscow.

A new emissary from Paris, Judyta Nowogrodzka, turned up in Warsaw at the end of June 1938. She got in touch directly with " Jasny." She passed on to him the contents of a short document handed to her by representatives of the Comintern, who remained anonymous, in the offices of the French Communist Party. " Jasny " informed the provisional leadership on 2 July. This was the crucial date: the KPP no longer existed although the process of its total disappearance proved to be protracted, meeting with protests, antagonism and resistance. Long-term political prisoners took it particularly badly. In 1937, there were 3,219 prisoners sentenced for communist activity, 2,109 of them (65 per cent) receiving sentences of more than eight years. The arrests continued after the party had been liquidated. In 1938 Aleksander Zawadzki was sentenced to 15 years in prison. Many of those detained were never brought to trial but sent instead to the isolation camp in Bereza Kartuska. Of the 766 prisoners in Bereza, 310 were sent there during 1937. In 1937, 5,579 people were arrested for communism, in 1936 there were 7,591 arrests. The numbers decreased in 1938 and 1939 but the police continued to hound communists and to charge them. In 1939, 85 communists were sent to Bereza. The police still regarded them as a potential danger. And not only the police: the voevoda of Kielce, which included the mining region, noted in his monthly report the continuing communist influence in the trade unions and local government. In the elections to the council of Centralna Kasa Bracka, a self-help organization run mostly by the miners, the communists won 15 out of 29 seats; they took all the seats in the ballot of the building workers' union in Czeladz and Strzemieszyce, and held a majority in the

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metal workers' union in Dabrowa and Bedzin. In the local government elections of 1938 and 1939, the opposition parties (PPS, Bund, " Stronnictwo Demokratyczne " and the trade union candidates) were greatly helped by the communist vote. Norbert Barlicki, representing the PPS Left, became the mayor of Lodz, and Antoni Pajdak, later one of the 15 tried in Moscow in June 1945, was elected deputy mayor of Cracow. The Lodz administration reported that during the elections " the communists, despite the lack of an organizational network of their own, managed to get three councillors (S. Pietrzak, M. Sumerowski, K. Witaszewski) and four deputies (J. Kempinski, K. Mikulski, J. Rdzeniowski, P. Waskiewicz) voted in. The socialist trade unions, controlled by the PPS, had a membership of around 400,000 in 1937. The figure had doubled since 1935. Their last congress took place in the autumn of 1937. There were 137 delegates, 12 of them either ex-members of the KPP or else communist sympathisers. Of the newly elected Central Committee of the trade unions, three out of 36 were communists (P. Sankowski, A. Stachurski and H. Altman). It is possible to estimate that the communists held between 8 per cent and 20 per cent of the trade union vote. But in many trade unions their influence was much greater: among those of building workers, metal workers, Dabrowa region miners, Warsaw shoemakers and textile workers. The KPP was rooted in the Polish working class. It was not an easy task to break up its organizational structure. There was resistance everywhere: the Paris emissaries Chil Szraga, Pinkus Kartin and Marceli Skornik, were virtually unknown to KPP members and not of sufficient calibre to persuade others to their way of thinking. The provisional KPP leadership capitulated, realizing that it was useless to fight against Stalin's orders. They decided, however, not to issue a statement but to spread the news by word of mouth. In any case, they did not have any official instruction or resolution in writing. The sentence was passed in the absence of, and without the knowledge of, the accused. To this day, Stalin's reasoning cannot be documented. Historians in Poland, left to their own devices, argue from their knowledge of Stalin's later foreign policy, that it anticipated the Stalin–Hitler Pact of 1939. But this interpretation is no more than speculation. It seems that the problem might be better understood by studying the political mechanisms of the totalitarian state. Are its attributes an integral part of socialist ideology? Perhaps of an even wider concept of human domination of natural and social forces? Or have they been the pathological outcome of crossing Western socialist thought with the despotic barbarism of the East?

The destruction that took place was not only of individuals, leaders and activists, but of the Party as a whole. It may also be pointed out that the murder of Polish communists not only preceded, but also in a sense anticipated, the Katyn murder of Polish officers less than three years later. The provisional KPP leadership transmitted the orders to liquidate down the line: right down to local cells. The whole of the Party organization, partly paid and partly voluntary, amounted to 50 full-time

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functionaries in August 1936. Two years later the figure was much reduced because of the shortage of funds. The Paris emissaries virtually had to act on their own. In the end, they decided to break away from their instructions and to issue a statement justifying Stalin's decision. The statement was issued as a duplicated document headed " Statement on the Communist Party of Poland by the representative of the Comintern." The police managed to get hold of a copy, which is how we know of the document's existence. The crucial paragraph read as follows:

> In accordance with the Comintern resolution, anyone disobeying its decision and not abandoning the Party organization will be treated as an enemy spy and a police agent . . .
> . . . anyone organizing a Party outside the Comintern will be treated as an *agent provocateur*.

It should be stressed that until then there had been no Comintern resolution on the subject. Jozef Kowalski, the historian of the KPP, is of the opinion that a resolution was issued after the event in August 1938. He bases this view on the statement contained in the Soviet work *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional, Kratkii istoricheskii ocherk*, published in Moscow in 1969 and available in Polish translation. Was there such a document, signed by representatives of five communist parties and declaring the KPP disbanded? No one has ever seen it. The resolution of the 20th Congress in which the KPP was rehabilitated continued the mystifying process: it referred to a 1938 resolution of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. But at that date the Comintern no longer functioned as a separate institution. It had been destroyed and was but a skeletal body. Dimitrov still presided over it, enjoying the reputation of the hero of the Reichstag trial, who had boldly accused the Nazis of starting the fire. But the Dimitrov of 1938 was not the same man. He had nothing to say and was terrified of sharing the fate of other Comintern officials who had been shot, tortured, imprisoned for years or handed over to the Nazis. Decisions concerning the communist parties outside the USSR had long before passed into the hands of the *apparatchiki* of the Central Committee of the Soviet Party. Its Polish department was headed by Zofia Dzerzhinski and her son Jan, son of Felix. The personnel department was headed by the Bulgarian " Guliaev," a member of the NKVD. The Party *apparat* and the police had become indistinguishable. The words " Executive Committee of the Comintern " could by then only serve to mislead. For a long time before it was officially liquidated in 1943, the Comintern was only a name, a façade and a decoration. All the important issues (money, tactics, personnel) were decided by the appropriate bureaucrats, members of the Soviet Party-police-intelligence-army joint services, which were frequently at odds. Their archives could elucidate many a political murder, murder " to erase the evidence," a bloody vendetta against those who dared disobey orders, but also against some who obeyed orders

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and cooperated with the enemy or handed over communist " allies." Many issues, still disguised by a pseudo-political façade and supposed ideological differences, will one day be more easily explained, but we have not yet obtained access to such archives, if indeed they have not already been destroyed.

MANY KPP members in 1938 believed the accusations against the leadership of their Party. They did not know them personally and it seemed too absurd to think that they could be accused of crimes they had not in fact committed. What would be the purpose of it? The warning, claimed to have been issued by the Comintern, was taken seriously by many Party members.

The Paris emissaries signed their *Bulletin No. 1* of August 1938 " Workers, peasants, and the working Polish intelligentsia in support of the Comintern's resolution disbanding the KPP." They also ascribed the authorship of Lipski's, Sankowski's (and perhaps Kwiatkowski's) statement of June 1938 to the political police. As previously noted, they included a stern warning that to continue with the old organization would amount to political provocation.

Despite all this, an examination of the events of the next three years leads one to believe that the efforts by both the Paris emissaries and the provisional leadership to destroy the organizational structure of the KPP were not altogether successful. At the level of housing block committees, sometimes even at the level of local committees, the contacts continued. They took the form of social meetings, of discussion among friends and colleagues. Despite the disappearance of the vertical organization network, the horizontal plane continued to function. Political news was exchanged, plans for the future were made; much counselling, professional and personal, took place. Financial help was offered when necessary and money was collected for political prisoners. It was expected that the Party would be reborn.

The Communists Without the Party (1939–41)

The Party links survived best of all in prison. There were communists in 88 different prisons, but most of them, whether awaiting trial or serving sentence, were grouped in a few larger prisons such as Rawicz, Koronowo, Wronki, and in some older prisons in Poland: Fordon, Sieradz, Warsaw, Drohobycz, Lwow, Lomza, Cracow, Lodz, Baranowicze and Wilno. Immediately before the start of the war, the most important communist prisoners were moved to Rawicz. Included among them were Marian Buczek (killed in September 1939), Marian Nowotko and Pawel Finder (later secretaries of the PPR), Stefan Wierblowski (later a senior official of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs), Alfred Lampe (later the ideologue of the Association of Polish Patriots in the USSR) and Jan Izydorczyk (later a senior member of the PPR *apparat*), who preferred to stay in Poland during the war rather

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than flee to the east, terrified that as an ex-member of the KPP Central Committee he would be liquidated by the NKVD. He spent most of the war in German concentration camps, including Buchenwald. There were altogether about 500 communist prisoners in Rawicz. The prisoners organized themselves into communes, a form of prison self-government. They elected their own representatives to negotiate with the prison governors. Very little changed after the dissolution of the Party. Resolutions continued to be passed, including political ones, and the struggle against Trotskyites continued (i.e. against anyone who did not support the Moscow trials) and against those who signed the " declaration " issued by the police authorities. In the Bereza camp, almost all the prisoners signed the declaration, according to which they had to undertake not to take any part in politics after being released. Very few prisoners withstood the pressure and refused to sign. Jakub Prawin was one such prisoner. Wladyslaw Wicha, Minister of Internal Affairs under Gomulka, signed the declaration and was freed from Bereza; this resulted in threats and blackmail later on. Stanislaw Radkiewicz, incidentally, signed a similar declaration when caught by the police crossing illegally into Czechoslovakia in the early 1930s. This was well known and after the war was used against him as Minister of Public Security to make him an obedient puppet, a faithful and humble servant of Beria, ready to follow blindly the Soviet " adviser " General Lalin.

The paradoxical situation of the Party organization's survival in prison continued until the end of 1938 or the beginning of 1939. Only then, from visits of relations and lawyers, smuggled letters and newly-arrested prisoners, did the news of the dissolution percolate through the prison walls. When told about it earlier, by the warders and the prison administrators, communist prisoners had refused to believe it. Newspaper articles met with the same kind of disbelief. When the Germans occupied Czechoslovakia in March 1939, and the threat to Poland became evident, prisoners passed resolutions declaring their readiness to donate their modest savings or their work to the National Defence Fund. Many volunteered to join up, others offered to help by making uniforms and putting together gas masks. The prison administration accepted money but ignored the volunteers. Organized resolutions were discouraged and the initiators were often punished (e.g. in Fordon, Sieradz and Warsaw) by being given a hard bed or by being sent to a punishment cell. The censors kept the knowledge of the prisoners' generosity from the press but it got through to the public at least once when a letter sent to the democratic weekly *Czarno na Bialym*, signed only with the initials K.D., was printed in full on 30 April 1939. It contained information about the contributions to the Air Defence Loan from Rawicz and the voluntary work on military uniforms in Sieradz prison, where the prisoners' representative was Wladyslaw Gomulka (later First Secretary of the PPR and PUWP).

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IN the outside world, the communists were active in the trade unions, in the Democratic Clubs and their associate organizations (Jerzy Borejsza, co-editor of *Czarno na Bialym*), in PPS (Henryk Dembinski, the leader of the communist youth in Wilno), in the democratic press (Karol Kuryluk, editor of the Lwow *Sygnaly*), in professional associations (the Union of White Collar Workers, the Architecture Section of the Democratic Party, the Youth Section of the Warsaw Democratic Club), the students' organizations (Democratic " Bratnia Pomoc ") and various organizations of an intellectual and educational character. The communists took a lively part in local government elections, by supporting the PPS, Democratic Party, Bund and trade union candidates, mainly in Warsaw, Lodz, and Cracow. They also took part in organizing the May Day and 3 May demonstrations.

When war broke out, they joined the army as volunteers: many ex-political prisoners were deprived of civil rights for a number of years and were therefore not subject to general mobilization. Others joined voluntary units run by the PPS (" Czerwoni Kosynierzy " in Gdynia and workers' brigades in Warsaw), hospitals, auxiliary services, trench diggers. Among them were prisoners who managed to escape, mostly helped by criminal prisoners who had been freed by the warders. The Hitler–Stalin Pact had no effect on their conduct: they considered it to be a cunning quibble by the clever Georgian who needed to gain time, although the immediate shock was great and some communists condemned the step. The entry of the Red Army into Poland was the next shock. The news reached Warsaw, then under siege, only after 20 September. The Russian plan, it was said, was to go as far as the Vistula and the Warsaw suburb of Praga. Even that piece of news failed to move the communists, some of whom fought in the volunteer battalions defending the capital. Many of them were refugees from Lodz who had to leave their city in the first week of the war, when the Germans occupied it. After " Black Monday " (25 September), when Warsaw was strafed from the air and shelled by German artillery, when raging fires resulted in a catastrophic water shortage and the number of wounded grew beyond an acceptable level, the Council for the Defence of Warsaw decided to surrender the city and the capitulation was signed on 27 September. The new agreement between Germany and the USSR, which defined the frontier between the two countries, was signed the following day. The frontier between the two " friends " was to follow the line of the river Bug, not of the Vistula. The Red Army units occupying Krasnik, Tomaszow, Siedlce and other towns on the " wrong " side of the Bug, retreated.

A NEW period started which was to last for nearly two years: Soviet rule of Western Ukraine and Byelorussia, into which was incorporated the Bialystok region with its million inhabitants, exclusively Polish in the countryside, with a large proportion of Jews in the towns. The present frontier runs to the east of Bialystok and Przemysl (which

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was, together with Suwalki, under German occupation during the war). Wilno, declared a part of Lithuania in September 1939, became a Soviet city in July 1940. In the meantime, it sheltered a considerable number of Polish refugees, some of whom subsequently managed to escape to the United States in 1940 via the USSR and Japan.

The Soviet authorities approached the Polish communists with distrust. After all, they had belonged to a Party of *provocateurs*, spies, fascists, and imperialist agents. The official posts were filled by Soviet functionaries, most of them from small Soviet towns and townships and completely ignorant of the outside world. One should remember that the Great Purge had taken place less than two years before and had swept away not once but three times, anyone of quality and value in the Party, the administration, the army and the economy. They had been replaced by people with no education or character, by unscrupulous careerists, the generation of Stalinist "*oprichniki.*" They were permitted to rule "feudal" Poland and were ready to show what they were capable of. They regarded Poland with contempt because it had been defeated. "It fell to pieces shamefully," explained badly-translated propaganda leaflets issued by the two Red Army commanders, Kovalov for the Byelorussian front and Timoshenko for the Ukraine.

Many Polish communists, especially the ex-prisoners, found themselves on the Soviet side of the frontier and were joined by the others after the first wave of terror passed over the German-occupied part of Poland. Besides communists, there were a number of radical peasant activists, men of learning, writers, poets, journalists and students. Some of them returned to the German-occupied part of Poland, offended by the anti-Polish attitude and disenchanted with the brutality of the Soviet authorities. Many were arrested at the frontier and sent to prison or to the camps. Some young workers, members of the Communist Youth Association, went to work in the USSR, in the Donets Basin and the Urals.

Most ex-KPP activists, until recently political prisoners, congregated in Lwow and Bialystok. The Polish communists met there and discussed the future. The present situation seemed to them transient and provisional: the communists had no doubt that the Hitler–Stalin Pact was unlikely to last. It was difficult for them to build their hopes for the future on Great Britain and France, still led by the hated Munich men, Chamberlain and Daladier, who had betrayed Czechoslovakia and had failed to come to Poland's rescue. The USSR was still the only hope, the only potential conqueror of fascism. The communists hoped for an early change in the Soviet attitude towards the Poles and the Polish communists. Many memoranda were written and dispatched: to Stalin, to Dimitrov, to the Comintern. They rarely received a reply. Some decided to return to German-occupied Poland to be in the area where, as they hoped in time, the Party was going to be reborn. Marian Spychalski, Jerzy Albrecht, Szczesny Zamienski, Hanna Szapiro were among those who went back. Others stayed on, working in whatever capacity they could: as

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teachers, foremen and factory-workers, editors of Polish language newspapers. The future ministers, ambassadors, political leaders, Politburo members and other dignitaries of the post-war era filled modest posts: Wladyslaw Gomulka worked as deputy manager in a factory producing exercise books, Jakub Berman left Bialystok for Minsk where, in October 1940, he was to become editor of a Polish paper, Aleksander Zawadzki ran a hotel in Pinsk. Artur Lampe started work in a textile factory in Bialystok but was dismissed for objecting to work on Christmas Day. He was unemployed for a time, until Pawel Finder found him a job in the Planning Department of the Council or, as it was known officially, the Area Council of Workers' Delegates. Some continued at the University, studying medicine, law or engineering.

They watched events on the Soviet side of the border without much enthusiasm; it was a lesser evil, lesser, that is, than the German occupation. They waited, expecting the international situation to change. Some thought that it would be wrong to become actively engaged in politics but in any case no one expected them to do so. The Soviet deportations and arrests soon began with the arrest of Wladyslaw Broniewski, the leading " proletarian " poet. Other arrests followed.

After the fall of France, the Soviet authorities' handling of Polish themes improved somewhat. The 85th anniversary of the death of Adam Mickiewicz was officially celebrated in November 1940. Eighty-five Polish, Ukrainian and Jewish writers (Boy-Zelenski among them) of the so-called Western Ukraine were admitted to the Ukrainian Writers' Association. Byelorussia followed the Ukrainian example. Academics from Lwow were invited to visit Moscow. In January 1941, a new Polish literary monthly under Polish–Soviet editorial control was launched in Lwow. In the spring of 1941 a special commission started to vet Polish communists. Those who passed were issued with Soviet Party membership documents. Membership of the KPP was allowed to stand for the purpose of establishing Party seniority.

THERE was still no question of reconstructing a Party which would bring Polish communists together. Some of them, exceptionally, were allowed to become members of the Soviet Party. It seems that the prevalent Soviet view favoured recruiting Polish communists directly into the Soviet secret services, thus avoiding having to deal with an independent organization capable of emancipating itself and evolving political targets of its own.

Inside Poland the situation was different, the ties binding Polish communists remained solid at the grass-roots level. They kept in touch with one another: old acquaintances, prison comrades who once shared a cell, members of the same union living in the same block or employed in the same works. Gradually, however, radio news started to percolate through, more or less regularly, and some translated reports from the Soviet press became available. Curiously enough, the first organized group to emerge was " Spartacus," which brought together members of

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the pre-war school organization network. The young felt less constrained by the orders of the Comintern and they soon launched a mimeographed newspaper *Strzaly* (Arrows); unfortunately not a single copy of it has survived. It was issued in 200–300 copies and concerned itself with theoretical problems, far removed from the current situation. The leader of the group was Wladyslaw Buczynski, who operated under the pseudonym " Kazik Debiak." For a few months in 1940, the paper was distributed in the " Aryan " part of Warsaw and also in the Ghetto.

THE revival of the communist movement dated from early 1941, undoubtedly a consequence of German military manoeuvres in Polish territories, directed towards the Soviet frontier. Outbreak of war between the Soviets and the Germans was in the air: it spurred the communists into action. They tended to think that the Red Army would enter the General Government immediately. It seems that Soviet Intelligence shared that view and wanted the ground prepared. Unfortunately, we have no documentation of the early organized groupings, which started up in Warsaw and in northern Mazowsze, and we do not know how deep was Soviet penetration of the country. The organizers were old activists of the KPP, usually at local level, workers (most of them members of the Transport Workers' Union), drivers, shoemakers, masons, a few were members of the radical intelligentsia and some were peasant activists. The Warsaw cells operated in several quarters of the city, most of them in Zoliborz. An underground paper *Mlot i Sierp* (The Hammer and Sickle) appeared in the spring of 1941 and became the focus of the group " Rady Robotniczo-Chlopskie " (Workers and Peasants Councils); a collection of arms was begun. The leaders of the Central Revolutionary Committee were Julian Wieczorek, Kazimierz Katz and Marian Kubicki. A Warsaw Committee was formed, contacts in the countryside were taken up and talks with "Stowarzyszenie Przyjaciol ZSRR" (Association of Friends of the USSR), an organization active in Zoliborz, were started. The phraseology used by these groups went back to the " sectarian " period of the KPP; there were no references to a People's Poland (only one Cracow group used the term), the operational slogan was that of a Soviet Polish republic. The Gestapo soon penetrated those organizations and the first arrests were made on 22 June 1941, on the day the German-Soviet war broke out. The arrests multiplied to include, in the autumn of 1941, members of the Association of Friends of the USSR. It is worth noting that a number of organizations with that name mushroomed throughout Poland at this time. It is possible that they were in fact organized by Soviet Intelligence. Their very name suggests something of the sort although no relevant documents are available to us: they may be hidden in the archives of the Gestapo (among the prisoners' statements) or in Moscow. We can only guess.

Optimistic predictions that Soviet military action would take place in enemy territory proved to be unwarranted. The survivors of those early

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groups eventually joined the Polish Workers' Party when it came into being at the beginning of 1942.

The leading group among those who had been active in the autumn of 1941 was known as the " academic " group: before the war its members had belonged to the student organization " Zycie " (Life), which had had among its leaders Marian Spychalski, Jerzy Albrecht, Franciszek Leszczynski, Wlodzimierz Dabrowski—all well known later as leading members of the Polish Workers' Party. In 1941, the group started a movement called " Zwiazek Walki Wyzwolenczej " or ZWW, an acronym very close to that of the forerunner of the Home Army, known at that time as ZWZ (" Zwiazek Walki Zbrojnej "). The movement's propaganda was based on programmes transmitted by " Tadeusz Kosciuszko," a radio station transmitting from Moscow in Polish. The programmes urged a start to partisan activity, acts of sabotage and intelligence gathering behind the German lines. A Soviet Poland was never mentioned and no political programme of any kind was offered.

AT about the same time, a Polish team was being organized in Moscow; its members were to be dropped into Poland in order to establish a political party on similar lines. Its name was decided by Stalin, against the wishes of the Polish communists involved in its formation. It was to be called the Polish Workers' Party and thus to avoid the word communist altogether. Was it because the Communist Party had had a very limited following in Poland? Or was it because the pre-war Party had acquired in Moscow the reputation of a party of *agents provocateurs*? It is difficult to be definite, but most probably the new Party was to keep its true character under cover in order to attract a greater following on the patriotic ticket. Its first statement suggested just that. It appealed to all Polish patriots and made reference to the Polish Army being organized in the USSR under the command of General Wladyslaw Anders. These references were received with a degree of amazement by communists in Poland and were removed from some Polish versions of the statement. It leads one to assume that there were two trends in Soviet policy which coexisted uneasily: one backed longer-term cooperation with Poland and Great Britain, and another traditionally rejected any concessions and recognized only one solution—that of communist hegemony. All this was, however, in the future. At the time, uppermost in everyone's mind were the realities of the situation.

The name of the Party and the outline of its programme were settled in Moscow by Stalin, Manuilski, Zofia Dzherzhinski and her son Jan. Eleven men were selected to be dropped into Poland, some of them to do intelligence work only, others were assigned political tasks. The leadership was in the hands of three people: the First Secretary was Marceli Nowotko, a man of working-class origin who had behind him 10 years spent in Polish prisons; second in command was Boleslaw Molojec, who took over the duties of First Secretary for a period of one month

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after Nowotko was murdered in November 1942. Molojec had been one of the commanders of the Polish Jaroslaw Dabrowski Brigade during the Spanish Civil War and, later, was the leader of a group in Paris responsible for the abortive attempt to rebuild the Party in Poland. The third person was Pawel Finder, a member of the intelligentsia, who had worked for the Party in Austria and France, where he studied chemistry. Other members of the group, such as Czeslaw Skoniecki, Andrzej Szmidt and Jakub Aleksandrowicz, were to mix intelligence work with party assignments. They were to be dropped in various parts of the country.

THE original plans of the Polish communists, worked out in Byelorussia at the beginning of July 1941, included the forming of a Polish battalion in the Red Army. Those plans were abandoned when the Polish-Soviet agreement, which included the establishment of a Polish Army (originally to contain two divisions) in the USSR, was signed by Sikorski and Maiski. Up until the beginning of 1942, and the first Soviet military successes, Stalin refrained from aiding and speeding up the organization of the Polish Party, which might have jeopardized his relationship with the Polish government in London. The first attempt to fly the 11 founder members of the Polish Workers' Party to Poland took place in September 1941. At about the same time, a group led by Mikolaj Arciszewski and consisting of a few Polish officers from the prisoner-of-war camp in Griazowiec was despatched to Poland. Its task was to collect intelligence: it functioned until the summer of 1942, supplying important information about German preparations for a new offensive on the southern front (Stalingrad). The group was eventually destroyed by the Gestapo. In its work it was substantially helped by information collected by the forerunner of the Home Army, the ZWZ, with which it cooperated in its intelligence work. In a separate operation, a 100 or so ex-soldiers of the Dabrowski Brigade were dropped; almost all of them perished.

Originally, the 11 were to be flown from Moscow, but the distance was beyond the capacity of the Douglas plane. The group was therefore moved to Wiazma, on which the Wermacht units were closing in at the time. On the third attempt, the plane crashed and Jan Turlejski, a member of the group, was killed. There were several wounded. The flight was postponed for three months and the group was moved to a Comintern school near Ufa. Maria Rutkiewicz, the only member of the group now alive, took Turlejski's place.

The first group, which included the three leaders, was flown to Poland to land near Warsaw on 28 December 1941; the second party left a few days later for southern Poland. Beside Nowotko, Molojec and Finder, the first group included Czeslaw Skoniecki, Andrzej Szmidt and Maria Rutkiewicz. During the landing, the group's radio transmitter was lost. Only when the next group was dropped, in June 1942, was direct radio contact between Nowotko, Moscow and Dimitrov re-established. The correspondence has survived but the only communications to have been

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published were those sent from Poland. The despatches—instructions from Moscow—have not been published and have not been made available to Polish researchers. It is possible to deduce from one of the despatches, published a few years ago, that most of the group's tasks concerned intelligence gathering and sabotage. Political activity took second place. It seems, indeed, that it was the intention of Moscow to shape the movement as an auxiliary force to its own military thrust. We must stumble in the dark here, forced as we are to rely on speculation and guesses.

Had the ground not been prepared by local activists, it would have been impossible for the group to build up, as it did in the course of six months, a party and a military organization of 3,000 to 5,000 people. Communist groups of a different character already existed in a number of places, both in the General Government and in those parts of the country which were included in the Reich, such as Lodz, Slask and Mazowsze.

THE Party's first proclamation, composed in Moscow, appealed to Slavophile sentiments very much in vogue in Moscow at the time, but not really acceptable in Poland. It discussed unemployment, but did not mention forced labour. It called for the formation of a National Front (a policy commonly practised by communists in resistance movements of the occupied and satellite countries). But with whom were these united fronts to be formed and under what conditions? No mention was made of that. It seems that they had in mind an organization which would start from the grass roots, bypassing the existing structures or, alternatively, bringing them under communist control. The social and political elements of the programme were not spelled out and consisted of generalities: " the struggle for a Poland without fascism, without enslavement by landowners, without concentration camps, without the repression of national minorities, without hunger and unemployment." It was something in the nature of a minimum programme, lacking positive formulations. It was not until 1943 that the Polish Workers' Party was to issue a positive programme of change for the Poland of the future. It came about in connexion with negotiations and talks which also involved the Polish government's delegate and the Home Army. The purpose was to organize common resistance at a time of increasing Nazi terror. A communist initiative was received by the other side as an attempt to penetrate the pro-London organization.

Thus, the Workers' Party was established in Poland. But in the USSR Polish communists continued to be regarded with suspicion and reserve. Only after breaking diplomatic relations with the Polish government did Stalin turn his attention to the Polish communists. Even then, he only allowed the formation of a few military units under the command of Soviet officers. The units (first a division, later a Corps and finally the Polish Army in the USSR) were commanded by Colonel Zygmunt Berling, who, before the war, had had nothing in common with the

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communists. The in-fighting in the 1st Corps (especially after the battle of Lenino on 12 October 1943, in which Polish units took part) led to a questioning of the purpose of the armed struggle. Two concepts evolved: Poland could either become a controlled democracy ruled by the military, or a country ruled by political parties, led by the Communist Party under a different and new name. The political structure won the day—then. " Biuro Polskich Komunistow " came into being in Moscow in Janurary 1944. It had no political authority in the USSR as the Polish Communist Party had been dissolved.

The Soviet leadership regarded Poland as a territory in which the police and army had a greater chance of success. The communists had been repeatedly disowned and discredited: in 1939 as agents of the police, during the war as internecine murderers, after the war as right-wing deviationists of 1948, in 1956 as revisionists, in 1968 as Zionists. The purpose of all these campaigns was to create opportunities and make way for agents plain and simple with no political views of their own. Playing one off against the other meant more room for manoeuvre for Moscow.

IT was indicative that when General Sikorski came to Moscow to discuss, in a very taut atmosphere, problems such as the disappearance of the Polish officers taken prisoner by the Russians in September 1939, Stalin, in a huff, told him that it was he, Stalin, who was going to reconquer Poland and hand it over to the Poles. At the same time (on 1 December 1941), the NKVD issued a directive to the effect that only " ethnic " Poles were to be regarded as Polish subjects. Members of ethnic minorities—Jews, Byelorussians and Ukrainians—deported to the USSR in 1940 and 1941, were to be regarded as Soviet subjects. This decision applied to Ehrlich and Adler, the leaders of the Bund, among others, who were arrested and executed on the outlandish charges of past cooperation with the Nazis. The policy embodied in that directive wrecked the Polish-Soviet agreement of July 1941. The Polish embassy in Moscow (later in Kuybyshev) fought desperately on behalf of all Polish subjects, whatever their religion or ethnic origin.

The new Soviet attitude signalled a policy which was to regard all Polish subjects within the USSR as Soviet citizens. They were soon forced into accepting Soviet identity papers; this happened in 1943, after the USSR broke off diplomatic relations with the Polish government in London. The break was a political move of very grave significance. Poland was to be regarded as a part of the immediate Soviet sphere of influence. This certainly implies that in the wake of the first military successes on the Moscow front and at Rostov, Stalin had a political solution in mind which placed the whole of Poland within the Soviet orbit. The despatch of a group of Party organizers to Poland at that time tends to support this hypothesis.

And so does the launching in the USSR of the fortnightly *Nowe Widnokregi* in May 1942. Nominally, the paper was edited by Helena

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Usijewicz and Wanda Wasilewska: in fact Alfred Lampe was in control. Lampe, a member of the KPP Politburo between 1929 and 1932, survived because he happened to have spent the period from 1933 to 1939 in a Polish prison.

MEANWHILE in Poland, the Polish Workers' Party established some local committees and an underground paper, *Trybuna Wolnosci*, at first mimeographed and later printed. At the start, military units were an intrinsic part of the organization. But in May 1942 they became a separate wing called " Gwardia Ludowa," under the command of Boleslaw Molojec. A conflict soon developed between those who wanted the Gwardia to lead the Party and others who maintained that the Party was to remain in overall charge. It was later said that the murder of Nowotko in November 1942, was committed on the orders of Molojec, who hoped to become the First Secretary of the Party himself. To this day it is not by any means clear who ordered Nowotko to be murdered or why. A certain amount has been written about the links between the Party and the Gestapo. It is known that two communists, Artur Ritter-Jastrzebski, who had connexions within the SA, and Boguslaw Hrynkiewicz, who managed to penetrate an organization called " Miecz i Plug," controlled by the Gestapo, were both working on assignments for Soviet Intelligence. But until we are allowed access to documents and other sources relating to the work of Soviet Intelligence in occupied Poland, many questions will remain unanswered. While we know a great deal about its political and military activity, its intelligence work remains a secret chapter in the history of the Party.

At the start, the Party wished to establish a number of National Struggle Committees (" Narodowe Komitety Walki "). The idea was for local PPR organizations to contact other underground units and to act together. It ended in total fiasco. The PPR was shunned and regarded by the rest of the Underground, loyal to the government in London, as an agent of Moscow. Nonetheless, the Party's influence grew, it published more titles, had larger runs of its periodicals, and its military units increased in number. The early units, many of them commanded by ex-members of the Dabrowski Brigade, were started in the summer of 1942. Franciszek Zubrzyski commanded a unit in Piotrkow district, August Lange another near Kielce, Grzegorz Korczynski one near Lublin. The units were small, under 20 men each, and poorly armed. But at least armed struggle was under way: the need for it grew daily as the Nazi terror and the deportations, such as those in the Zamosc district, multiplied. These partisan units were joined by Soviet soldiers who had escaped from prisoner-of-war camps, Jews fleeing from the ghettos, peasants and workers trying to evade deportation and forced labour in Germany. The AK also recognized the need to hide fugitives from the German police and it organized the network of " Kedyw " units at every command level. At the same time, the AK, known then as the PZP (" Polski

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Zwiazek Powstanczy ''), started a series of assassinations of the Gestapo butchers. The German reaction was to increase the number of executions of hostages in retaliation against " the agents " of London and Moscow. The activities of the AK and the PPR were developing along parellel lines but there was no question of cooperation between them. The numbers of the AK were very much greater and at the end of the war the ratio was about ten to one.

The relations between the USSR and the Polish government were steadily deteriorating and as early as the spring and summer of 1942, after the Polish Army's evacuation from the USSR to the Middle East, they reached breaking-point. But the Polish ambassador Stanislaw Kott, was then replaced by Tadeusz Romer; the embassy's paper *Polska* was allowed to continue publication; and Stalin had not started organizing " his own " Polish Army in the USSR. Was this because the new German offensive at Stalingrad was straining his resources to the utmost? Whatever the reason, the USSR took up the diplomatic initiative against the Polish government only after the Stalingrad victory, early in 1943. It led to the breaking of diplomatic relations and the formation of the Tadeusz Kosciuszko division in the USSR. Despite the fact that its commander, Colonel Zygmunt Berling, was a Polish regular officer, the real power was entirely in Soviet hands. In most cases Polish communists were given the posts of second-in-command as political officers.

" Zwiazek Patriotow Polskich " (Union of Polish Patriots) was formed in the USSR in June 1943. Its membership was to provide future cadres for Poland. Most of the Committee members, Andrzej Witos, Boleslaw Drobner, Stefan Jedrychowski and Wanda Wasilewska (who was never to return to Poland), in due course became members of " Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego " (Polish Committee for National Liberation). Thus an organization was being prepared which would take over the government of Poland as soon as Polish territories were liberated. It should be remembered, however, that it was not clear whether the whole of Poland or only its eastern region would be taken into the Soviet sphere of influence. In my own view, the matter was still undecided then and a partition of the kind adopted a year later in Germany was not ruled out. All depended on the timing of the military operations: on whether the Western Allies or the Soviet troops would first enter Berlin, Vienna, Prague and Warsaw. This was by no means certain in 1943 and depended on later military developments. That was why Stalin continued to steer a cautious line and tried to avoid a premature conflict with Great Britain while preparing an alternative solution of his own.

AFTER the murder of Nowotko, followed by that of Molojec who was executed on party orders for Nowotko's murder, Pawel Finder became the First Secretary of the PPR. Finder was arrested by the Gestapo in November 1943 and executed a few months later. Wladyslaw Gomulka took his place. Gomulka was not nominated by Moscow,

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whose confidence he did not enjoy: Boleslaw Bierut (brought over in the summer of 1943 from German-occupied Minsk, where he had worked for the local authority) denounced Gomulka to the Soviet establishment as a " factionist," " opportunist " and " adventurer." In the autumn of 1943, radio contact with Moscow ceased for a while after the arrest of Finder and Fornalska, who alone knew the relevant codes. At the beginning of the year, the PPR formed the underground " Krajowa Rada Narodawa " (the National Council), a political body restricted in fact to PPR activists, a few followers from the socialist Left and a few radical activists of the peasant movement. The KRN announced the formation of " Armia Ludows " (the People's Army). Gomulka and those close to him (Wladyslaw Bienkowski, Zenon Kliszko, Ignacy Loga-Sowinski and Aleksander Kowalski) hoped to increase the influence of the KRN by coming to an understanding with the body of the socialist and peasant movements. This was opposed by Bierut who branded it a policy of " self-liquidation " and, in 1948, made it into a main platform of charges against Gomulka and an alleged early indication of his " right-wing deviationism."

In December 1943 Eduard Benes arrived in Moscow to sign a Czechoslovak-Soviet agreement. A special protocol provided for possible accession to this treaty by Poland at a later date. Clearly, not all matters had been resolved in Tehran. Churchill had stated there that Rome would be free by January 1944, while in fact this did not happen until six months later; the fate of Germany had not been decided and it was not clear whether (and when) the Western Allies would reach Berlin. Or was Berlin to become an exclusively Soviet preserve? In the summer of 1944 the defeat of Germany was still expected before the end of the year. Had that happened, the map of Europe and the dividing line between the spheres of influence would have been different. The decision to order the start of the uprising in Warsaw might be judged in this context.

Late in 1943, Stalin considered forming a Polish National Committee in Moscow to be set against the Polish government in London. Preparations were begun and Alfred Lampe was instructed to write its political manifesto. However, all action was stopped by Stalin, who was still unwilling to antagonize the British government. The membership of the Committee was to have included people who later became members of the Polish Committee for National Liberation; and the main points of the Lampe manifesto were later included in the manifesto of the Polish Committee for National Liberation. The political brain of the Moscow Committee, Alfred Lampe, died; and shortly afterwards another organization, " Centralne Biuro Komunistow Polskich," was formed. Members of the PPR Politburo eventually joined in the autumn of 1944. The much-delayed news of the creation of the National Council in Warsaw reached Moscow. Officially, the Union of Polish Patriots conceded the supremacy of the National Council but there was no direct contact between the two organizations. The PPR had no branches or any

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form of representation in the USSR. In the spring of 1944, " Sztab Polskich Partyzantow " (the Staff of Polish Partisans) was formed in Volhynia with the purpose of supplying arms and organizing the parachuting of partisan units into Poland. The initiative was independent of both the National Council and the People's Army, headed now by a pre-war Polish general and a soldier of Pilsudski's Legion, Michal Zymierski—" Rola "—who had some associations with Soviet Intelligence. In a way, the two initiatives were parallel: Moscow wanted to have its own framework of partisan units in Poland, planning for an overall figure of 100,000 men which was never reached. In the Lublin district where the People's Army units were under the command of Mieczyslaw Moczar, " Mikolaj Demko," a sharp conflict developed between him and Leon Kasman, " Janowski," the commander of a unit parachuted in from the USSR. Kasman, on Soviet orders, demanded that the PPR submit to his leadership. He urged Gomulka to go to Moscow, but to no avail.

In April 1944 a delegation of the National Council left for Moscow. Its members were: the vice-chairman of the Council, Edward Osobka-Morawski who represented the socialists co-operating with the PPR; Marian Spychalski, a well-known architect in charge of intelligence on the People's Army staff; and another socialist, Jan Stefan Haneman. The fourth member, Kazimierz Sidor, a PPR activist, represented the National Council of Lublin Region. After an adventurous journey of two months, during which they were held up for a while and vetted by a Soviet partisan unit, the delegation reached Moscow in the middle of May. They saw Stalin and had talks with the American and British ambassadors, from whom they requested arms for the People's Army. They also paid a visit to the First Polish Army in the USSR. It was the first time that the small group of Polish communists serving in the First Army had heard about the existence of the PPR and its achievements. Naturally enough, the delegation tended to overstate the influence of the PPR and the People's Army at the expense of the AK and the delegate of the Polish government in London.

In the beginning of July, General Rola-Zymierski was flown to Moscow together with two representatives of the peasant movement, Jan Czechowski and Stanislaw Kotek-Agroszewski.

The Soviet offensive on the Byelorussian front started in late June 1944 and broke through the German defences; the river Bug (which, according to the Tehran agreement, was due to form the future boundary between Poland and the Soviet Union) was crossed on 20 July. Soviet troops had crossed the pre-war Polish-Soviet frontier as early as January 1944 but the country between the frontier and the Bug was regarded by the Russians as Soviet territory under the Supreme Soviet decision of November 1939, which declared its inclusion in the USSR; a decision which was of course based on Stalin's pact with Hitler. For the first time in the war, the Soviet troops found themselves in the territory of a foreign allied state. It became imperative to find a formula for co-

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operation. On 20 July, the day the Red Army crossed the Bug, Winston Churchill wrote to Stalin requesting his agreement for Mikolajczyk to visit Moscow. Stalin eventually agreed, but only after he had established his own government for Poland as a *fait accompli*: the Polish Committee for National Liberation, constituted on the Yugoslav and French models of liberation committees.

On the Committee, the Union of Polish Patriots in the USSR (nine members with a majority position), five representatives from Poland, and the members of two delegations visiting Moscow at the time were represented. It should be noted that the PPR was not represented. Formally, five more places were reserved for other home delegates but they were never filled; both Bierut and Gomulka arrived in Lublin only at the beginning of August.

The official history of the Polish People's Republic states that the Committee was formed in Chelm (the first Polish town of any size to have been taken by the Red Army) and not in Moscow, its actual birthplace. The Committee manifesto was made public in Lublin while the fighting was still going on. The emphasis differed from that of the National Council's manifesto. They both promised social and agricultural reform, but the Committee's manifesto omitted the nationalization of industry while promising a return of all property seized by the Germans to the owners, although it was to be temporarily placed under official control. The Committee described the government in London as " reactionary " and " self-appointed," while it virtually declared itself to be the only rightful power in the country. Not a revolutionary power, however: it claimed " legitimacy " by invoking the constitution of 1921, a truly democratic piece of legislation which the Committee had no intention of following; the very existence of the National Council was, of course, unconstitutional.

It should be added that the Moscow group responsible for the preparations for taking over power in the liberated territories had made a number of suggestions concerning the form of the future government. The suggestion of a provisional government was rejected out of hand by Stalin because he wished to continue negotiations with Mikolajczyk. The Kremlin also rejected the idea of establishing the office of delegate to the National Council for the liberated territories.

IT was important for Stalin to establish a formal understanding with the Committee for National Liberation. A document was signed in Moscow on 26 July 1944, based on a similar agreement between the USSR and Czechoslovakia signed in May 1944. The parties to the agreement were the *Soviet Commander-in-Chief* and the Polish administration. Article 7 gave the Soviet C-in-C jurisdiction over the Polish civilian population as far as offences against Soviet troops were concerned. The operational zone to which that jurisdiction was to be restricted was never defined and in practice it extended to all political activity in the whole of Poland and the " offences " came to include

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membership of the AK. Article 7 was later to form the basis for charges against the 16 Polish leaders, kidnapped and charged before the Supreme Military Court in Moscow in June 1945. The NKVD interned thousands of AK members and deported them to the USSR, as indeed it had done earlier in Lwow and Wilna. The AK members who had fought against the Wehrmacht in both these cities together with the Soviet troops, were all deported. The AK commanders, Generals Filipkowski, Krzyzanowski, Bittner and their staff officers, shared the fate of their comrades. Most of them never returned. The policy of terror thus continued, although under a different guise: here, west of the Bug, we had an army in Polish uniform, with an eagle, albeit with its crown, shining on their caps, the national anthem and Polish patriotic songs, white and red banners. The people of Poland, crushed by the war, received the victorious troops not with hatred but with reserve, distrust and a degree of hope. Naturally, no opinion polls were conducted but the people seem to have cooperated in a number of ways; in the fields of education, the establishment of courts, in administration and in agricultural reform. This went against the grain for the communists whose whole mental make-up made them expect a hostile attitude: in the light of their preconceptions the AK *should have been* actively hostile. Right from the start and certainly after the defeat of the Warsaw Uprising in October 1944, the struggle against the AK became their principal political aim: the AK, now not only a political opponent and a reactionary organization, but also a " servant of Germany and an instrument of Hitler and of Goebbels."

The Soviet military administration predated the establishment of an administrative network by the Committee for National Liberation. The Russian administrators conducted their own policy and it was they who dispensed power. If we were able to study the surviving documents we would have a much fuller picture of the liberated territories between the Bug and the Vistula, but they are not available to Polish historians.

The fighting in Warsaw started on 1 August. The Russians, on the opposite bank of the river, had been calling for an uprising. The liberation seemed a question of days rather than weeks. From the south, the road to the suburbs of Praga on the right bank of the Vistula was virtually open: there were no German defences to speak of. The commanding officer of the 70th German Army had been taken prisoner. Yet the 1st Polish Army was moved away, so that instead of storming Praga, they were to attack the Germans on the Pilica, near Warka. The offensive on the Warsaw sector was held up. A Russian tank corps bypassed Praga on the east side and moved north towards Radzymin where a fuel shortage brought it to a standstill. The Germans re-took Radzymin. Praga was eventually freed six weeks later when the Uprising was practically over. An attempt to create Russian bridgeheads over the river was no more than eyewash, a demonstration doomed to failure. The defeat of the Warsaw Uprising and the capitulation of the AK were to be used later as arguments " proving " that " reactionaries " had caused the destruction of the capital. The débâcle helped to neutralize the

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attitude of the people towards the new rulers. The belief that the West was going to come to the rescue had gone. Nothing was left but to try to rebuild the country in cooperation with the communists.

The talks in Moscow in August 1944 between Mikolajczyk and a delegation of the National Council failed to reach agreement, as each party put forward conditions unacceptable to the other. Mikolajczyk acted in the belief that he had the majority of the people behind him, while the PPR counted on Russian support. The Russians offered the communists the only chance of keeping power and of establishing, as many of them believed, a modern, prosperous, progressive and enlightened Poland. The illusion that they were going to be masters in their own country was still alive among the communists, who failed to see that the Kremlin would make all the decisions and would regard the Party as an instrument of its own. Of course the Party, for its part, also planned to use the people as its instrument of power. Legitimacy was not a factor of great consequence in its eyes, whereas the taking and keeping of power was. In the long term this proved the main reason for its bankruptcy, made so evident during the 16 months when the independent trade union Solidarity was active. It became necessary to break the people by brute force using the army and the police. The declaration of martial law in 1981 was, in a sense, a return to the earliest period of communist rule under the Committee for National Liberation, an attempt to replay history with a difference. The evolution which led to the October of 1956, to the student and intelligentsia movement of 1968, to the workers' revolt of 1970, the strikes and disturbances of 1976, and finally to the real democratic revolution of 1980 and 1981, was to be crushed. The story started anew, less bloody than in the early years but with more widespread and generalized consequences.

In the period immediately after the war, the country was rent by sharp political, social and cultural conflict: the town and the countryside, the intelligentsia and the workers, differing war experiences, restricted participation in organizational structures such as the AK (with its quarter of a million members, perhaps a million counting sympathizers), the peasant movement (three-quarters of a million), and finally the PPR, with its 20,000 in the early days rising to some 300,000. On the other hand, Solidarity at its peak engaged 10 million people (while the Party had about 3 million members, a quarter of whom have since resigned). Polish society has become more homogeneous and united, while the Party turned out to be divided, isolated and devoid of influence, despite having the appearance of a mass movement. The taking of power in 1944 began a new stage in the Party's history: an underground organization was given control of the country. However, it did not owe its elevation to power to political popularity (as did the Czech Party) but to foreign military backing.

Translated by Krystyna Bronkowska

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Courier from Warsaw

Jan. T. Gross

MEMOIRS are a very demanding literary genre. Readers expect from them enlightenment and entertainment, and are lucky if they get either. Jan Nowak's book* gives us both.

When the Polish edition of Nowak's book came out in London (Odnowa, 1978) it quickly gained wide acclaim. Its most receptive audience was in Poland where, ironically, it could not be bought but had to be smuggled in. But the reading public could make its preferences known, for at that time uncensored publications were already circulating widely. *Courier from Warsaw* was promptly published in Poland by the most important independent publishing house NOWA; it received a prize from one of the two most important literary magazines, *Puls*; and when the most respected independent political quarterly, *Res Publica*, quizzed a number of prominent intellectuals about the most valuable *polonica* published abroad that should be made widely available to Polish readers, Nowak's *Kurier z Warszawy* appeared on the short list of books of many respondents. His writing won the praise both of distinguished Catholic intellectuals, such as Stanislaw Stomma, and of leading social democrats, such as Adam Michnik. Nowak's was a non-partisan account of a period in Polish history that has aroused more passions and induced more ideological distortions than any other. His book speaks about the Second World War in a country which lives its history with the despair and intensity of one which is being cheated of its present. It has won the admiration of readers across the entire spectrum of Polish public opinion.

LIKE most young men from the intelligentsia (he had just enrolled at the University when war broke out), Nowak (or rather Zdzislaw Jezioranski, for Jan Nowak was his *nom de guerre* which he later kept) joined the resistance movement. The network of anti-Nazi conspiracy in Poland was the most elaborate in Europe. A parallel state and a parallel society existed in occupied Poland during the Second World War, with a substitute government administration, a full array of political parties and an underground parliament, a secret army, a network of educational institutions, welfare agencies and over 2,000 independent underground periodicals. One could join any of these institutions, depending on which friend happened to serve as a go-between, or on some other equally fortuitous circumstance. Nowak joined the propaganda service of the Home Army (AK) and became involved in so-called " Action ' N ','' where " N " stands for *Niemcy*, the Germans. The purpose of " Action

* Jan Nowak, *Courier from Warsaw*, The Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, 1982; Collins/Harvill, London, 1982.

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' N ' " was to sow confusion and undermine the morale of German soldiers and the occupation administration. " Action ' N ' " succeeded in creating a semblance of an anti-Nazi, *German* underground organization by publishing fake underground journals and leaflets as if they were written and distributed by a network of German anti-fascists. They were disseminated all over the occupied territories and in Germany itself, and even reached front-line soldiers fighting in the east: through " Action ' N ',' " the Polish Underground was exploiting resentments and dissatisfaction within the ranks of the occupiers. Nowak was in charge of setting up a distribution network throughout German-occupied Poland, and in Germany as well. The descriptions of his travels, disguises and ruses, and of the catastrophes that befell his collaborators, give a vivid impression of the day-to-day life and work of hundreds of thousands of Poles who were actively involved in the Underground during the German occupation.

LATER Nowak played another role, referred to in the title of his book, that of courier. He was chosen to travel abroad, once to Sweden and twice to England, carrying important messages from the Underground. He proved to be not only a resourceful organizer of distribution networks of illegal literature, but also a man capable of memorizing vast amounts of facts and transmitting them or, if called upon to do so, giving brief and accurate summaries. Needless to say, these abilities were put to good use when he sat down to write his memoirs 30 years after the war.

What renders Nowak's testimony so interesting is that as a courier he became personally acquainted with the main protagonists of the historical events described in his book. In Warsaw he was briefed by virtually the entire politico-military leadership of the Underground, while in London he was received by Eden and Churchill, and had countless conversations with the whole gamut of British opinion-leaders and, of course, with leading personalities of the Polish government-in-exile. His book contains some illuminating individual profiles—notably those of General Kazimierz Sosnkowski who succeeded Sikorski as Commander-in-Chief, of Prime Minister Stanislaw Mikolajczyk. He also draws short sketches from some brief encounters, like those with Churchill's confidant, Major Morton, who made every effort to bar Nowak's access to the British Prime Minister.

Only when scenes from Warsaw's daily life and the underground struggle of the Poles are shown side by side with scenes of high-level diplomacy in the most important Allied capital of the war, can we grasp the drama of Poland's fate at that time. Having fought bitterly against both the Soviet and the Nazi occupation imposed on them in September 1939, the Poles could not understand what principles could justify giving their country to Stalin after the war. With the hindsight of four decades, the Poles' inability to accept this appears to be vindicated. By agreeing to leave East-Central Europe within the Soviet sphere of influence, the

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West not only undermined the principle of popular self-determination, but committed something even less pardonable in politics, namely, a mistake.

These and other issues and events are given the most illuminating treatment in Jan Nowak's *Courier from Warsaw*. There is a gripping account of the Warsaw Uprising in 1944, in which he participated shortly after his first trip to London, and the story of human solidarity under stress, of deeds which determined individuals can accomplish against overwhelming odds. Yet, paradoxically, something is conspicuously lacking from Jan Nowak's reminiscences—the dominating presence of the author: amidst friends, historical personalities and casual aquaintances, the " I," the first person singular, is almost absent from this remarkable book.

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Two Fatherlands—Two Patriotisms

Jan Jozef Lipski*

A FATHERLAND exists only because there are also alien lands and, consequently, there can be no concept of " us " and " ours " where there is no " them " and " theirs." It is the attitude to " them," more than the attitude to " us," which defines the notion of patriotism. Love for one's own country and for one's nation can only be understood, perhaps somewhat paradoxically, by one's attitude towards other countries and nations, but this paradox is intrinsic to all intellectual and emotional individuation.

Who are " ours " and " theirs "? What distinguishes " my " country from one that is not mine, " my " nation from one that is not mine?

The answers to such questions are not affected by the various kinds of descriptive characteristics of nations: the fact that we speak Polish and " they " speak their own language or that we live according to a different cultural pattern from " them " is not in itself a crucial factor. The formation of our culture was produced by the synthesis of the adoption of Christianity from the West in the tenth century and the percolation of the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and Romanticism. Even if some of us believe that the greatest poet ever was Goethe, Dante or Shakespeare, Mickiewicz and Slowacki mean something very different to us. The experience of years of tyranny and struggle for liberation has probably been forever ingrained in the Polish national consciousness. Perhaps, although this can be disputed, most of us are marked by something which could be called the Polish national character. The issue is not concerned with objective descriptions, but with value-judgments: do we consider ourselves better or only different? Do we believe that there is some kind of special worth vested in this difference? And, if so, how is it defined? Do we believe that by some prerogative we are entitled to special rights and privileges and, perhaps, have certain obligations to others? Depending on the answers to these questions, we lay claim to different patriotisms. In extreme cases we in fact belong to different fatherlands, if a fatherland is defined not only by membership of one exclusive ethnic group, but also by a unity of spiritual wealth and values.

THE system of values against which it is necessary to view the question of a fatherland is, above all, the system of moral values. We belong to that cultural orbit whose ethical concepts were shaped primarily by Christianity. Whether or not we believe, we were moulded by the commandment which orders us to show love for our fellow man, and this is the basic moral guideline of our culture. However, I do not

* This is a slightly shortened version of an article which originally appeared in *Kultura* (Paris), No. 10/409, Oct. 1981. Its author in Poland became the target of vicious attacks in the official press.

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wish to diminish the importance of the moral contribution of other religions and world views: Judaism, out of which came Christianity; Islam; Buddhism; Hinduism; and Confucianism, the most secular oriented ethical culture, all achieved much that is worthy of respect in the sphere of ethics. Philosophers of our cultural ambit, who represent a non-religious, secular current, also enriched our ethical development and consciousness. Nonetheless, it was Christianity above all that gave us our moral nourishment, and it is within the fundamental concepts of this ethic that we wish to remain.

I believe that chauvinism, national megalomania, xenophobia or hatred of everything foreign, and national egotism cannot be reconciled with the Christian commandment to love our fellow man. On the other hand, patriotism can be reconciled with it. Just as the special love for one's own family need not, and should not, create an obstacle to love for one's fellow man, so the special love for members of one's own national community should be subject to the same higher moral order. Patriotism issues from love and should lead to love; any other form is an ethical travesty.

" LOVE for everything Polish " is a common formula of national " patriotic " stupidity: after all, there were some rather shameful manifestations of pre-war Poland, such as the fascist ONR (National Radical Camp), the pogroms of Lwow, Przytyk and Kielce, the Bereza camp, and similar aberrations which are also " Polish." Patriotism is not only respect and love for tradition; it is also the relentless selection and discarding of elements in this tradition, and an obligation to this intellectual task. The burden of guilt for making fallacious judgments about the past, for perpetuating morally false national myths which serve national megalomania, for remaining blind to the blemishes in our history is, from the moral point of view, not as great a sin as committing evil against our fellow man, but is the premise of evil and the path to future evil. Every time we romanticize our past and obscure the facts with omissions and half-truths, every time silence is kept and the atrocities our nation has perpetrated are glossed over, the fires of national megalomania are fuelled. It is an illness. Every evasion of acknowledging one's own guilt is a defilement of the national ethos.

We have two traditions in Polish literature regarding the treatment of historical themes. One serves the interests of national megalomania and the other is the bitter tradition of reckonings, the tradition of Zeromski. According to him, Saragossa is both a national tragedy and a disgrace; the Austrian partitioner provided legislation which carried a measure of social progress, and the Polish peasant of the January Insurrection (1863) is portrayed with naturalistic verisimilitude—a far cry from the usual " patriotic " sketches. His novel *Early Spring* (1924) is a frightening and cautionary indictment of independent Poland and its ruling bureaucracy. The paradoxes of the Polish People's Republic in the 1960s had to exist in order to attack Andrzej Wajda from a " patriotic "

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position for precisely the sentiments he found in Zeromski, and in order for Zeromski's work to become the subject of historical and literary based texts in the period of the Moczarist offensive.

EVERY new " patriotic " offensive must be viewed with suspicion when it manifests itself as an uncritical echo of the beloved slogans of national megalomania. Behind the phraseology and *maquillage* which Poles find generally acceptable, lurk cynical technicians of sociology who watch to see whether the fish has bitten. Which bait from its national history does it like best? The Ulan's shako, the hussar's wings, the combat jacket of the Uprising? In his poem *A Moral Treatise*, Czeslaw Milosz wrote:

> It is not unlike a quagmire,
> Once entered it pulls one in more deeply.

For many years, the nationalistic and patriotic phraseology used in the press has been accompanied by a campaign against anyone who dares to spoil the views and panoramas portrayed there for the consumption of fools. The attack against Kazimierz Brandys' *Postal Variations* is particularly vivid in my memory. It is one of Brandys' wisest and most ambitious works. A whole pack of " patriotic " journalists and critics set upon him as someone who ridicules and mocks our past. This was astonishing. Brandys poignantly tells the story of a Polish family which with each successive generation, together with the rest of the nation, goes to battle to fight for the independence of the fatherland; each generation suffers defeat and the vanquished fighters are cast into the pit of destitution, illness, social and psychological derangement. This is the tragic truth of the fate, if not of the entire nation, then at least of its elite which is the bearer of the nation's consciousness. I read this novel as one would read an historian's account of the disasters befalling a nation, and I became practically ill from it. Once again I relived the tragedy of our history only to learn later from the critics that Brandys was . . . ridiculing and mocking. I suppose it depends on one's sense of humour . . . and on the subject.

This and similar campaigns were conducted as a rule in the same periodicals and by the same journalists whom we came to know in the memorable year of 1968. Soviet lackeys had donned the uniform of an Ulan.

Pause for reflection: what purpose did these masquerades serve? Whom were they supposed to fool? Whom were they trying to lure with their " patriotic " bait? Whom were they trying to poison with their chauvinistic venom? What has all this to do with love for the fatherland? And which fatherland is it?

If this concerned the official press only, if no one had been ensnared by this " patriotic " lure, if such strains were absent from Polish tradition, there would be nothing to write about or with which to polemicize. But unfortunately this is not the case. Refrains of national

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megalomania and xenophobia can also be found in the uncensored, and therefore genuine, press. There is an enormous social gulf between the " official " and the " uncensored " expression of " patriotism," and the abyss is filled with people over whom the battle is being waged. Which fatherland will they choose? We must not, on any account, foresake those people, suffocated by xenophobia and national megalomania, but whose thoughts and feelings have not yet been irreversibly mutilated by hate and pride. The form that Polish patriotism adopts will be decisive for the fate of our nation and for our moral, cultural and political future.

XENOPHOBIA and national megalomania nourish and support one another. We know the extent to which Poland suffered at the hands of the Russians and the Germans, but this does not vindicate overstepping the boundaries of stupidity and hatred with regard to these nations. An individual and a nation harms only itself through such stupidity and hatred. The extent to which xenophobia is enmeshed with idiocy is apparent from the fact that they combined in August 1968 to prompt some of our compatriots to agree to an invasion of Czechoslovakia, which was an affront to our morality and contrary to our national interests.

Let us consider the attitude of the majority of Poles to the Germans and the Russians. It is morally corrupt not to acknowledge the existence of moral problems just because it is more convenient not to. For centuries we have held grudges against the Germans. The Prussians, together with the Russians and German-speaking Austrians, partitioned the First Republic. The dispossession of Polish peasant lands and the national and religious persecution under the Prussian partition were already the first signs of what was to come during the Second World War. There is no point in dwelling on the enormity of Hitlerian crimes committed on Polish soil. However, if we wish to remain in the fold of Christian ethics and Western European civilization, there must come a time for us to say: " We forgive and ourselves ask forgiveness." We were able to express this sentiment at the time of the ascendancy over our nation of the Polish Church, the greatest independent moral authority still remaining to us. We must affirm this as our own; its moral content alone is sufficient cause for its adoption. But there is also a national and cultural element: as a nation with a sense of membership in Western civilization and culture, we dream of returning to our larger family, to Europe. Therefore, there is a need for reconciliation with the Germans who already form a part of this Europe and will continue to do so. The boldest and most prescient act in post-war Polish history took place when the Polish Episcopate extended their hands to the German Episcopate. The words spoken to the German Episcopate, however, represented a problem which cannot be circumvented if one wishes to remain faithful to the precepts of the Christian religion: the question of our guilt with regard to the Germans. Even to pose such a question in

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Poland is quite unacceptable and one can understand why: the apportionment of guilt is strikingly unequal. Nonetheless, we must not be satisfied with viewing our own guilt lightly, even if it is immeasurably less than theirs. Evil is evil, even when it is a lesser or unavoidable evil. Committing evil creates a moral responsibility, even though the victim of that evil may have committed an evil one hundred times greater against us.

A large number of myths and false inventions about our historical relations with the Germans have been amassed in the Polish consciousness. These must someday be rectified in the name of truth and in the interests of our national sanity. Such historical illusions are a sickness of the national spirit and serve permanently to sustain our xenophobia and national megalomania.

Virtually every Pole today (even educated Poles!) believes that after the Second World War we returned to the lands that the Germans had stolen from us. In pursuit of historic Polish claims to the areas that constituted Poland after the war, we have muddled and distorted the facts. Many of these regions and territories, in East Prussia for example, were never Polish and were gained by the Germans at the expense not of the Poles, but of the Prussians. Western Pomerania, ethnically Slav but non-Polish, stubbornly threw off Polish suzerainty several times and created its own state apparatus which survived until the seventeenth century, when it was destroyed by the Swedes: the Russians took these lands, which were not even inhabited by the Poles, from the Swedes and not the Poles. The Germanization of Western Pomerania followed a natural, non-violent course. Silesia had been a vassal state of the Czechs since the Middle Ages and, together with Bohemia, became part of the Austrian monarchy. The Prussians annexed Silesia from the Austrians, not the Poles, in the eighteenth century when the Germanization of Lower Silesia and Upper Silesia preserved their Polish ethnicity. The organized, and to some degree successful, pressure from Germanization did not become a factor in these areas until the latter half of the nineteenth, and during the course of the twentieth, century.

WE also ignore the fact that German culture had flourished in these lands for several hundred years. We read wistful articles about the Silesian Piasts, about their castles and palaces, but no mention is made of the fact that " our " Prince Henryk Pobozny (1258–90) is known in German literary textbooks as " *Minnesanger* " (their " troubadour "), who composed his poetry in the language of Walter von der Vogelweide and Hermann von Aue, whereas it was not until two centuries later that Polish anacreontic verse was to develop and blossom. Henryk is a symbolic figure in the history of Silesia.

The centuries of German culture which evolved alongside our own Polish culture in Silesia, Warmia, Mazuria, Gdansk and the Lubusz territory, and the exclusively German culture of Western Pomerania have given us a rich inheritance of architecture and works of art. We are

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the custodians of this achievement for mankind, and are obliged consciously to guard this German cultural achievement without hypocrisy and silent omissions, and to protect these treasures for the future, which is our future too.

We do not care to write about or recall our debt to the Germans in terms of culture and civilization. The Polish word for roof (*dach*), brick (*cegla*), stonemason (*murarz*), printer (*drukarz*), painter (*malarz*), woodcarver (*snycerz*) and hundreds of others, testify to the debt we owe our western neighbour. The splendid architectural achievements, the sculptures, paintings and examples of other arts and crafts in Cracow and many other Polish cities and towns, which were executed from the Middle Ages up until the nineteenth century, are to a great extent the work of the Germans who settled there and enriched our culture. Practically every Pole has heard of Wit Stwosz, but not everyone knows that he was an ethnic German. No one, other than art historians, knows the names of the hundreds, and perhaps even thousands, of German artists who left an indelible imprint on our culture.

History should be a gateway to the past. Which symbols would we like to choose for the future? Should the decimation of Polish culture by the Hitlerites in the Second World War dominate our consciousness, or should the enrichment of our culture by Wit Stwosz and hundreds of splendid lesser-known artists predominate? Do we wish to remember only the German flesh-skinners of Auschwitz or also that handful of Germans, both prisoners and those in the garrison, who fought against evil? Jozef Garlinski, the *émigré* writer and historian, wrote about this in his work *Oswiecim Walczacy* (Fighting Auschwitz) which is based on first-hand accounts and was published some 15 years ago in London; nowadays, Polish customs officials have instructions to confiscate this book. In our consciousness can Germans only be members of the Gestapo or SS? Were not the heroes of the " Weisse Rose " in Munich also Germans, who in the very pit of darkness took up the most difficult of struggles, the struggle against " their own " in time of war?

The "Weisse Rose" was a somewhat eccentric group of true Christians whose actions, such as could be achieved, bore witness to the fact that, unlike the majority of their compatriots in those years, they were Christians not only in name, but were prepared to accept martyrdom in order to live according to the precepts of truth and goodness. Their credo, although it had nothing to do with Poland directly, should live with us: in the first place because they were Germans, of the same nation as the murderers of millions during the Second World War, and secondly, to remind us of the ethical imperative which affirms the moral obligation to go against one's own nation and state when they assume a criminal course of evil, even when the nation and the state are fighting a war. Are the heroes of the " Weisse Rose " unworthy of the name of German patriot? Were they traitors to their own nation? On the contrary, it was they who saved the remnants of their nation's moral dignity and created values indispensable to the future of Germany. In

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their souls, they cherished a fatherland different from the one in which they had the misfortune to live and die like martyrs.

The fear and distrust harboured by a substantial number of Poles towards the Germans is understandable. It would be foolhardy and absurd to assume that the effect of nationalism, which has increased steadily since the age of Bismarck and Willhelm I, if not earlier, has disappeared without trace from the Germans, both in their attitude to us and in their mentality generally. There is no shortage of information, exaggerated out of all proportion by our official propaganda, concerning life in modern-day Germany, which offers proof that we should observe with caution a segment of the German population which could potentially lapse into recidivism. At the same time, however, we must do the maximum possible to create the optimal atmosphere for reconciling our two nations. For this to be possible, we must above all change many things within ourselves and in our historical consciousness.

THE typical Polish attitude to the Russians is different. A great deal of hatred mixed with fear, but also much respect, has accumulated with regard to the Germans. Besides hatred (less deeply rooted than towards the Germans, and milder) and fear (nightmares about Soviet tanks shooting down rebellious Poles), the prevailing attitude to the Russians is now mixed with a feeling of superiority. The devil only knows from where this stems, but generally the Poles are convinced of the inferiority of Russian culture to their own. The cultural " superiority " and " inferiority " of nations is a delicate and dangerous subject. In many respects, nations resemble individual human beings. Just as a person who is raised according to the Christian ethic, and accepts it cognizantly, understands that every human being, Christian or not, has worth and dignity to no lesser degree than another human being (although one may be wise, another foolish, one good, another evil), so every nation has its worth and dignity regardless of whether at any given time it is possessed by Hitlerism or some other abomination, or whether it has a wealth or poverty of art, etc.

To have a sense of cultural superiority over a nation which produced Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, not even taking into consideration at least 20 other writers who could be the pride of any European literature, a sense of superiority over the nation of Rublev, Mendeleev and Stravinsky, must indicate some great misunderstanding. This is the nation which had already created the *byliny* (epic songs) and great church paintings while ours was still an impoverished national literature and our painting was in its infancy. No Polish writer has exerted such influence on the literature of the West (that West to which we belong) as have Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Turgenev and Chekhov. Nor is there any indication that the traditions and culture of the Polish peasant are richer than those of the Russian peasant. They are just different. Our megalomaniacal sense of superiority over the Russians is both grotesque and pitiful.

This attitude receives legitimation from another perspective. Since the

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Romantic period, certain concepts have gained currency in Polish ideology, according to which, supposedly, Russian culture was negatively affected by the hybridization of Byzantine and Mongol-Tatar influences. In simple terms, one could say that the result of this Byzantine-Mongol hybrid is a culture in which the subordination of the individual to hierarchical authority is apparent, that collectivism dominates over the individual, that the ethic of the horde dominates over the ethic of the individual.

As is usual with such generalizations, some things hit the mark and at the same time much of it does not tally. The traditions of Muscovite despotism certainly bear generic relation to the model of Chinese rule, and the position and role of the Tsar and his court certainly was modelled on Byzantium. But countering this tradition is another Russian tradition—that of spiritual independence, which began with Prince Andrei Kurbsky (1528–83) if not earlier. It is a tradition of dissent and the search for ideological support in the West. The Russia of the Decembrists, Herzen, Bezkishin and the other supporters of the January Insurrection of 1863, " Zemlya i Volya," the *narodniki*—this is not Byzantine-Mongol Russia. In our own time, the Russians coined the word *samizdat* which has also come into Polish usage. They were the first. They showed the way and paid a heavy price. Furthermore, resistance there is more difficult and requires more courage.

LET us not forget that the liberation of all of eastern and central Europe from Soviet totalitarianism depends largely on emancipatory movements within the USSR. The Russian nation, which is numerically the largest and plays the most important role in the empire, is still far from demanding its democratic rights. As an oppressed nation, it is consequently particularly demoralized. But there now flourishes a new phenomenon: Soviet " patriotism " (unfortunately, one comes up against this phenomenon not only among the Russians). It is not difficult to find among these " patriots " proponents of a policy of interventionism and pacification which keeps a tight rein on the satellite states. Any mention of the possibility of self-determination for the nations which comprise the USSR becoming reality provokes anger. Greater respect, purged of a grotesque and foolish sense of superiority, and a more vital fraternalism should align us with the Russians who are struggling for freedom. The number of Russians who opposed the totalitarian and police system, considering the degree of repression they encountered, can only fill us with awe and admiration compared with the few courageous individuals in Poland who dared to take such action.

Although the USSR is heir to the aspirations and even the style of tsarism, and although Russian nationalism plays an enormous role in Soviet expansionism, when we speak of the Russians we do not wish to remember that while Sovietism attempts to destroy the national identity of the Lithuanians, Latvians, Ukrainians, Georgians, Armenians, Poles, etc., it is also forcefully destroying the national identity, traditions and

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culture of the Russians. Sovietism is as deadly for the Russians as for the Poles.

THE Lithuanian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian nations should occupy a special place in our appraisal. These nations have shared a common fate with us for centuries. Little do we realize, however, that they celebrate this common fate far less than we do. The Polonization of the nobility of Lithuania and Rus propelled these nations into the ranks of " non-historical " peoples who did not begin to produce their own new elites, the intelligentsia, until the latter half of the nineteenth century, and then only with difficulty. Although the Polonization of these nations occurred as a natural process, achieved without the use of force, it was nonetheless a disaster for these nations and retarded their own development. This is not easily forgotten.

The Ukrainians also well remember the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; that is, they remember the terrible, barbaric Polish pacification of the Cossack rebellions and peasant insurrections; on the other hand the Ukrainians choose to ignore their horrifying slaughter of Poles and Jews in 1648 and the massacre in Human. The Poles' memories of these events are just as selective.

The Polish-Lithuanian conflict over Vilnius was a truly difficult issue to settle. Both nations had emotional links with this city. To this day the Lithuanians harbour a bitter grudge against us for Vilnius; to this day we bear a grudge against the Lithuanians because there were groups of collaborators from among their ranks during the Second World War whose acts were particularly harmful to the Poles (and even more so to the Jews). We must break this vicious circle!

The register of guilt, according to which the Ukrainian and Polish nations reproached one another, received a further debit during the Second World War. This time there was little for which the Poles could be reproached: immediately after the war, the Ukrainian Insurrectionary Army (UPA) suffered defeat at the hands of the Soviet Army—they were pushed into the south-western perimeter of the Polish protectorate and fighting flared up in the Bieszczady mountains. The solution to the problem of the Ukrainian partisans was to turn the area into a desert, an idea certainly conceived by the mind of a KGB " adviser." Members of this organization were talented practitioners of the Roman principle of *divide et impera* and were familiar with such precedents, but on a far grander scale, in their own native country.

I WISH to add some thoughts on our relations with the Czechs. The unilateral solution by means of military force to the problem of the Silesian territory on the Olza River in 1920, at a time when the very existence of the Polish state hung in the balance, is not a point of honour for the Czechs. Nonetheless, Poland's participation in the partition of Czechoslovakia by Hitler was an ignominious deed. Thirty years later, Polish troops took part in the occupation of Czechoslovakia. The Polish

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nation cannot be held accountable for the rule imposed on it from outside, which relies mainly on power from outside, but the frightened silence kept by all but a few Poles,* with their glorious tradition of struggle for " your freedom and ours," is a shameful fact of our recent past. One even came across people so naïve that they accepted the invasion and senselessly churned out absurdities about a German threat or about Czech enmity towards us . . . National megalomania and xenophobia merged again to conspire against a nation which is particularly close to us, especially now. What petty lack of solidarity we showed our brothers from beyond the Carpathians!

We must understand that for moral and political reasons, our traditional xenophobia and megalomania towards all surrounding nations is suicidal for Poland. We are already deeply imbued with Sovietism which threatens us with the loss of spiritual ties with our past, with Western culture and with the ethical traditions of Christianity. We must recognize that either all the nations of the USSR and her satellite states will be free from the threat of death and decomposition (moral *and* political), or none will be. The likelihood of totalitarian Sovietism being forced to release us, its prey, from its claws is minimal.

ANTI-SEMITISM, so distinct a manifestation of xenophobia with so different a function and role in history, demands separate discussion. Is anti-semitism indeed a product of xenophobia?

When there was a community of Jewish people living in Poland who differed from Poles in every way (language, national consciousness, religion, customs, manner of dress, etc.), the anti-semitism directed at them certainly constituted xenophobia. Yet even when it was not a question of language or dress, and the victims of anti-semitism had long parted from the religion of their forefathers, they were also discriminated against because of their true or presumed affiliation with the Jewish community: this was still xenophobia. However, when this xenophobia was extended to people who had been Polonized for generations, and who often professed the same religion as the majority of Poles, who were saturated with Polish culture and even fought for the freedom and independence of Poland, then this was no ordinary show of xenophobia, a demeaning and undesirable phenomenon at the best of times, but not necessarily bordering on the socially psycho-pathological. The only possible explanation for such anti-semitism is racism, often subconscious and not loudly professed. However, to believe that a race has less worth because of its biological and racial determinants is irreconcilable with our Christian ethical heritage.

One justification for anti-semitism is based on religious and pseudo-Christian premises. The rejection of Christ by the Jews and the attribution of guilt for His blood to their descendents, is made analogous

* The only voices of protest raised against the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968 were those of Jerzy Andrzejewski and Zygmunt Mycielski in letters to their Czech and Slovak " brothers." A small group of students in Warsaw also attempted to distribute leaflets against the Soviet action.

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to the original sin of mankind and is therefore supposedly a proof of their inherent evil. This theory is more obscurantist than theological: a model of anti-Christianity. Christianity does not recognize collective guilt, or collective responsibility for guilt. In Christian theology original sin is not a matter of hereditary guilt, but of the contamination of human nature. Moreover, after centuries of tolerating this pseudo-religious justification for anti-semitism, it was finally rejected by the Second Vatican Council. An essential element of the Christian ethic is the conviction that a person may be judged only by his actions; every person is equal and no judgment of his actions can abrogate the commandment to love thy neighbour. Nevertheless, anti-semitism is rooted in the centuries-old Christian-Polish nation in a manner that should raise our concern.

Anti-semitism or anti-semitisms? A sense of superiority over and contempt for a nation which discovered (or invented) the single, omnipresent, omniscient, purely spiritual God, a nation which has bred so many great scholars, artists, writers as proportionately no other nation on earth, a nation which has shown superhuman perseverance, has safeguarded its religion, culture and identity for millennia in hostile conditions, generates the most grotesque form of xenophobia. The spectrum of anti-semitic behaviour is broad: it ranges from superiority and contempt to a sense of feeling threatened, which can prompt various acts of discrimination right down to liberation through mass murder. The differences are enormous, but they are all irreconcilable with the precept of " love they neighbour."

In the Middle Ages, various despicable acts of anti-semitism took place in Poland, but nothing comparable to, or on the scale of, the dreadful pogroms in Western Europe at the same time. It was not until the latter half of the nineteenth century that " modern " anti-semitism made its appearance. By " modern," I mean the feeling that Jews should not be permitted to cross certain barriers of status; an aversion to other religious denominations spread beyond the *szlachta*. The process of " modern " anti-semitism in Poland had begun; its only restraint was the continued tradition of Jewish participation in the Polish struggle for independence, but even this brake was prone to failure. The anti-semitic mood penetrated ever more deeply into the Polish bourgeoisie, incited as it was by the provocations of the *Okhrana* in other parts of the tsarist empire and in the Polish Kingdom. Later, anti-semitism entered the ideology and the practices of the " Endecja " (National Democrats), and some publications of the ONR even advocated the extermination of the Jews in Poland.

Unfortunately, social resistance to anti-semitism in Poland was weak. The main party of the Polish Left, the PPS (Polish Socialist Party), was strong in workers' circles, but weak in educational institutions, from where the goon squads of the ONR were recruited. The Left and liberal intelligentsia expressed solidarity with the Jewish victims of the goon squads, but, on the whole, these were individual acts of courage. The

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authorities, who gravitated more and more towards the fascist Right after the death of Pilsudski, did not attempt to intervene too energetically. The Church viewed it with indifference and a segment of the Catholic press (e.g. *Maly Dziennik*) even supported anti-semitism.

THE war and the occupation, the horrifying extermination of the Jews by the occupying German troops, followed. In the West, mainly in Jewish circles crushed by the extermination of millions of Jews, irresponsible accusations were made which had virtually no basis in fact, regarding the complicity of the Polish nation. Such anti-Polish feeling should be regarded as no less shameful a phenomenon than anti-semitism.

They called us " a nation of extortioners " (*szmalcowniki*)—the phenomenon of " *szmalcownictwo*," that is, extortion from Jews in hiding or collaboration with the Gestapo in the extermination of Jews, was committed by a marginal group. Every society has its criminal element. This marginal group was so menacing to the Jews that for many of them it poisoned their attitude to Poland as a whole. One cannot blame a people who has been hunted for years for such a display of irrationality. But one must not forget that the Gestapo well knew how to make use of traitors not only in order to trap Jews in hiding, but also to uncover entire units of the Home Army. Thus, " *szmalcownictwo* " was not just a matter of anti-semitism so much as a diabolical exercise aimed at everyone whom the Gestapo pursued.

By no means all Jews professed such anti-Polish sentiments, and it was gross misrepresentation on the part of the Polish People's Republic to put out propaganda to the effect that most Jews in the world shared this attitude. This lie was itself of an anti-semitic cast based on wrong information. Anti-polonism among a section of Jews in the West cannot be attributed to all Jews, just as anti-semitism cannot be attributed to the entire Polish nation.

However, one must recognize that the truth of the matter is not as simple and clear as it is sometimes presented. It was not the persecution and tracking of Jews in hiding that sealed the Poles' guilt, but their indifference. It is true that it took an act of heroism to save Jews. I know of people who were armed when they were captured by the Germans and managed to survive the concentration camps, but I know of no single person who hid a Jew and survived being found out, nor have I heard of such a person. Moreover, a soldier in the Home Army knew that if he was arrested he would certainly be shot, but that his young children would survive. The Pole who hid a Jew could never be so sure. The French and the Dutch never had such a price to pay, nor were their endeavours to save Jews so impressive. Polish society's efforts to save Jews were great, worthy of respect, paid for in blood, and not without success. Apart from the individuals and families who saved their friends, and often chance persons unknown to them, institutions such as " Rada Pomocy Zydom " (Council for Aid to Jews) were in operation and made use of

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the support and aid from the Polish Underground. The position of the Polish authorities was clear on this matter. However, I believe that a substantial section of Polish society was indifferent to the extermination of the Jews and the blame for this must be attributed, among other things, to the rampant anti-semitism which existed before the war.

The history of anti-semitism in Poland does not end there. Immediately after the war, the country was shaken by news of a pogrom in Kielce. There is indication that this was a provocation of the NKVD and the Polish security police; there was a need to present Poland to Western public opinion as a country that was basically Hitlerized and to which only the communists could bring order. There is no conclusive proof of this, but such provocations can succeed only when they fall on fertile ground.

The Voice of Solidarity from the Warsaw Ghetto

An Open Letter from Marek Edelman*

I have been asked to join the Honorary Committee for the celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. I want to explain briefly why I have refused.

Forty years ago, we fought not only for our lives, but for a life of dignity and freedom. To celebrate our anniversary here, where the fabric of our whole social life is dominated by humiliation and oppression, where all words and gestures are falsified, would be a betrayal of our own struggle: participation in something which is a complete contradiction of it, a cynical act of moral turpitude. I will not take part in it and I will not accept the participation of others from wherever they may come and whatever name they may give to their participation.

Far from the manipulated celebrations, the genuine memory of the victims and heroes, of the eternal human striving for freedom and truth will survive in the silence of graves and in human hearts.

Marek Edelman
2 February 1983.

* The last surviving leader of ZOB (Jewish Military Organization) which fought the Nazi troops in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Dr Edelman, a cardiologist at the municipal hospital in Lodz, was elected to Solidarity's Regional Board before martial law and represented Lodz workers at the Congress of Solidarity in September 1981.

The Stalinist years stimulated anti-semitism in Poland and had predictable results. Before the war, as often happens with non-territorial minorities subjected to various forms of discrimination, the extreme internationalist Left was popular among Jewish youth and intellectuals. Subsequently, there was a significant number of Jews or persons of Jewish descent in the apparatus of the new ruling authority and particularly in the apparatus of oppression (the security police). Who knows, perhaps this was a Machiavellian order issued from Moscow headquarters? Minorities are well-suited to such a role because they are peripheral (compare the bloody role of Poles, Jews and Latvians in the Cheka); they also perform well the role of sacrificial goat.

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OCTOBER 1956 demonstrated that the motives for anti-semitism, though they smoulder to this day, were not so strong, despite isolated excesses. Several years later, an organized attempt was made to exploit these motives in a political struggle. A group which aspired to power under the leadership of Mieczyslaw Moczar raised the banner of anti-semitism (under the pretext of a struggle with Zionism) at first in a somewhat clandestine fashion, then overtly in 1967, and with fanfare and drum rolls in 1968. Theirs was an array of propaganda tricks that would be an embarrassment to term an ideology, although this was precisely the way in which they were used; " patriotism " which beat the drum of national megalomania. Certain successes were achieved but not in the campaign of anti-semitism. The very fact that it had been instigated from above condemned the campaign to mediocre success. Only the *apparat* and its activists were interested in this issue. As before the war, it had been the Polish petit-bourgeois who despised his Jewish competitor, now it was the Party blockhead who vied with his Jewish competitor for an available desk. In 1968 this was still a reality. It was the young people in particular who reacted to anti-semitism with hostility.

The expulsion from Poland in 1968 of thousands of Jews and Poles of Jewish descent is one of the ignominies of our country's history. The policed anti-semitism of the Soviet Union has been grafted on to us. It is no coincidence that the " March " [1968] elite of Party journalists was decorated with the Golden Insignia of the Association of Polish-Soviet Friendship. Besides the irreparable moral damage which these people and their *apparatchik* allies caused, the calculable losses must also include the exodus from Poland of all those who could not withstand the anxiety; there was a loss of experts and specialists difficult to replace. I can feel no common homeland with the " March " journalists and *apparatchiki*.

POLISH messianism bloomed in the hopeless international situation after the collapse of the November Insurrection of 1830. Our greatest poets and philosophers immersed themselves in this idea. Their genius enabled the magnificence of this idea to take flight. I believe it played a genuine role in carrying us through disasters, but I ask whether it did not also contribute to those disasters. The legacy of romantic notions has survived in the mentality of the average quasi-educated Pole. It gives him a special sense of superiority, often spiced with religious exaltation, just because he is a Pole. There is an interweaving of religious and national threads in the fabric of this notion; the positive aspect of it is that the patriotic bombast of the Party hardly touches Polish society.

Bogdan Cywinski wrote at length (in *The Genealogy of the Unmeek*) about what it means to be a Catholic Pole. I would like to draw attention to several aspects of this question for they are of fundamental importance to our definition of Polish patriotism.

The affirmation of the indivisibility of Polishness from Catholicism

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can be interpreted in various ways. Because in its most obtrusive interpretation this can mean that if you are not a Catholic you cannot be a fully-fledged Pole, it is necessary each time to state clearly whether this is the intended meaning. Recently, an article by Father Sroka about the indivisibility of Polishness from Catholicism appeared in the Gdansk publication *Bratniak*. When I questioned him in person, the author claimed that he had been misunderstood. What he meant was that Catholicism exerted so great and various an influence on Polish culture that the culture as a whole cannot be separated from Catholicism without the loss of its very identity. This is a reasonable thesis and should not be an affront to anyone, although it could well be a subject for discussion. However, I am more concerned with the first interpretation of the Polish-Catholic equation, which, it seems to me, is rather persuasive wherever we encounter simultaneously national xenophobia and megalomania constantly fed on imprecise statements such as this. In this first interpretation is contained a falsehood which is a disservice to our national tradition and the state of national feeling today. It excludes important dimensions from our national tradition, as well as excluding from national life those people who do not consider themselves Catholics.

What in Polish history and tradition is non-Catholic? Passing over episodes which had little impact on the course of our history, such as Polish Hussitism, we can start from the Polish tradition of the Reformation and Protestantism. There is no lack of Protestants among our national heroes, no lack of Protestant ministers among our Polish national activists. It is true that the Catholic Church played a great part in the perseverance of " Polishness," particularly after partitions in the Prussian part of Poland and the distant borderlands of the Russian part of Poland. But in the Cieszyn area of Silesia and in Mazuria, " Polishness " was fostered by the Evangelical Church and its ministers. The final act in this heroic national drama was the martyrdom of the unflinching Protestant ministers and activists during the Hitlerite occupation. The contribution of Polish Protestants to Polish culture and to the struggle for independence is so great that all attempts to exclude them from our Polish national community must provoke sharp opposition.

Similarly, one cannot agree to the omission of a vital and rich contribution to Polish culture from the time of the Enlightenment, and with particular intensity since the era of Positivism, by the non-sectarian laity, often atheistic, sometimes agnostic. It is difficult to imagine Polish culture of the last century without Edward Abramowski, Jan Dawid and his wife, without Waclaw Nalkowski and Ignacy Redlinski, without Stefan Zeromski and Andrzej Strug, without Stefan Czarnowski and Tadeusz Kotarbinski, without Edward Lipinski or Maria and Stanislaw Ossowski, without Antoni Slonimski and Maria Dabrowska, without Leszek Kolakowski. These are names which often represent whole schools and currents of Polish thought, the hundreds of names of Poles

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who have made an indelible contribution to the achievements of Polish culture.

ANOTHER variant of xenophobia is the cult of the "home-produced" as opposed to anything which comes from outside (mainly from the West). The strangeness of such an attitude is all the more striking when one learns that its major adherents at one and the same time generally preach about our ties with Western culture. Such a union of ideas will lead to our self-willed isolation; it is as though these people are of the opinion that our ties with Western culture are more than sufficient.

This attitude is ridiculous and nonsensical. Isolation has not yet profited any culture. The Poles have learned this to a substantial degree from experience. We adopted Christianity from the Czechs; it was then ingrained in us by the Czechs, Germans and other Western peoples. Poles began to travel to Paris and Prague, to universities in Italy and Germany in search of learning, at first in a small stream and then in large numbers, to the advantage of our culture. Our Western mentors, the French and Germans, taught us to construct Romanesque and later Gothic buildings which German artists and artisans filled with sculptures and paintings. The customs of West European knighthood took root in Poland. Civilization and culture spread from the West. At the end of the fifteenth century we began to draw heavily from Italy, then undergoing its Renaissance, and later from all of Renaissance Europe. The entire Polish elite studied at West European universities, primarily in Italy and Germany. From Germany came the Reformation which enriched Polish intellectual life. From the Turko-Tataric Near East, the Polish nobility took its style of dress, the furnishing of its rooms, its weaponry (and, unfortunately, its custom of human impalement). The influences on Polish literature from Italy, Germany, France and Spain have been apparent since the sixteenth century. It was not until the eighteenth century that these ties weakened and importation of this culture slackened with tragic results for Poland. But fortunately these ties strengthened again in the mid-eighteenth century. Polish artists again travelled to Italy in search of learning, a section of the aristocracy not only sought dresscoats and wigs, but also enlightened thought which gave flower to the Commission for National Education and some major reforms. And we have continued to draw heavily since that time: from the West came Romanticism and Positivism, Symbolism and Impressionism, Expressionism and Futurism.

However obvious, these things must always serve as a reminder. Polish culture always flourished symbiotically with these stimuli and not in opposition to them. Rarely did we draw so bountifully from the West, and with such resplendent success for our national culture, as in the sixteenth century. In the nineteenth century, Mickiewicz was entirely saturated with Western romanticism and yet he is extraordinarily

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original. Severing our ties with Western culture would be an act of national suicide.

It is painful at times to think that we took considerably more than we gave. We would like to participate in the European synthesis. With few exceptions, our influences have only been regional. The Ukrainians, Byelorussians and Lithuanians owe much to these influences, but the French, English, Germans and Italians owe little. The Russians have done much better in this respect—Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, old Russian iconography. I think that without being a national megalomaniac one can hold the opinion that Europe loses a great deal through its virtual ignorance of Mickiewicz, Slowacki and Norwid. On the other hand, it is relatively familiar with Gombrowicz and Mrozek. This already indicates that original artistic values, able to cross the boundaries of our national culture, continue to arrive at the junction which leads from the world to us and back again into the world.

THE thoughts expressed here are certainly not revelations, yet many questions that have been raised demand further probing. I imagine however, that for a rather sizeable number of [Polish] readers, these thoughts will be at least controversial and in part unacceptable. It was precisely for this reason that this essay was written, bearing in mind the extent of the spread of national xenophobia and megalomania in Poland, although I do not believe that this is always synonymous with acute chauvinism. I am convinced that one of the most fundamental questions of our present and our future lies in overcoming our national xenophobia and megalomania, or at least in defusing them to the extent that they are no longer dangerous to the destiny of the Polish nation. If this does not happen, any " agent " in an Ulan's shako who drapes a royal crest across his chest can lead the nation to wheresoever he wishes, beating on the drum of " national pride " and manipulating our phobias. We will lose any chance at all of cooperating with other nations which, like us, are oppressed by Sovietism. We cannot wait for an easy solution; we must begin to work on building solidarity with the oppressed nations. If not we will forever close the door to Western Europe which is our cultural cradle. Each year we are sinking deeper and deeper into Sovietism which is corrupting our system of values, our social links and our conception of our own national traditions. Sometimes it seems as though we are rushing towards this of our own volition. Or so it seemed in 1968. But let us hope that our nation will be too wise to fall prey to such manipulations.

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Paradoxes of Polish Nationalism

K. A. Jelenski

POLISH national sentiment is stronger now than it has been since the time of the German occupation, with the resistance of an entire people to the military junta imposed by Moscow. Paradoxically, however, the few " intellectuals " (all mediocre) who are collaborating with the regime, are on the whole chauvinistic and anti-semitic nationalists. Let me cite a few names by way of example: the conventional, moralizing writers Dobraczynski and Zukrowski, involved in the " Pax " movement (founded by Boleslaw Piasecki, leader of the pre-war fascist gang ONR-Falanga); the film-maker Bohdan Poreba (sworn enemy of Andrzej Wajda), president of the Grunwald Patriotic Association, a nationalist, anti-semitic group revived by the Communist Party in March 1981 in order to denounce the " Jewish miasma " at the heart of KOR and Solidarity; the director and actor Ryszard Filipski, director of the RF theatre and a notorious anti-semite.

During the Franco-Polish colloquium held last December at the Polish Library on the Ile Saint-Louis, Leszek Kolakowski pointed out that there are two authentic traditions coexisting in Polish culture, both of which are opposed by the communist regime: the Catholic tradition on the one hand, and on the other, a tradition of protest that dates back to the heretical sects of the sixteenth century but which became a secular protest after the Enlightenment. The history of Polish culture has been marked by these two traditions that are united for the first time by their common resistance to the communist regime, which represents, according to Kolakowski, " the culmination of the tradition of cultural obscurantism in Poland."

NATIONALISM, with its xenophobic and anti-semitic components, far from uniting the Poles, far from bringing them together, has been the principal cause of their division for over a hundred years. Nationalists called themselves Catholics and the term " Pole equals Catholic " was their rallying cry; from which emerges another paradox, this time of a semantic order. I grew up in a liberal, anti-chauvinistic left-wing atmosphere. I was 13 in 1935, the year of Marshal Pilsudski's death, who—one too frequently forgets—was the number one enemy of the Polish nationalists. I was an adolescent in Poland during the worst moments of this nationalism; a period of the rise of fascist gangs, and the tolerance of these gangs by the colonels, Pilsudski's somewhat off-course heirs. The term " Pole equals Catholic " therefore has sinister connotations for me, which are absent from the individual components of the term and even from its apparent synonym " Catholic

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Poles ''—which, at least since the last war, inspires me with nothing but respect.

I have taken a long time to rid myself of the hostility I felt towards the Polish Church before 1939, and I must say that my prejudices have been finally eliminated by reading Adam Michnik's book *The Church, The Left: a Dialogue*, published long before Karol Wojtyla became Pope. It is from the perspective of this book that I will approach the myth of the Polish-Catholic equation. In his book, Michnik admiringly cites the letter written in November 1965 by Polish Catholic bishops to German Catholic bishops: " We extend our hands to you, we grant you pardon and in turn we ask your pardon," wrote the bishops, which caused the official Party press to open an abusive campaign against the Church. Another anti-chauvinist, left-wing Pole, Jan Jozef Lipski (who today shares with Michnik the honour of being accused by Jaruzelski's regime of conspiracy against the state), wrote: " The boldest and most prescient act in post-war Polish history took place when the Polish Episcopate extended their hands to the German Episcopate."* Let me open a parenthesis on the defendants in the KOR trial which is being prepared and which is not irrelevant to my subject, as they are the *bêtes noires* of the Grunwald Patriotic Association. Following the Gdansk Agreement in August 1980, Stefan Kisielewski, one of the most free-thinking and courageous minds in Poland and undoubtedly the best-known contributor to the Catholic weekly paper *Tygodnik Powszechny*, wrote:

> We have not paid full tribute to the silent heroes of our present upheaval: Kuron, Michnik, Lipski, Chojecki, Litynski and the others. They are not protagonists of some political intrigue, as it is convenient to insinuate (these intrigues are planned elsewhere anyway), but they are purely and simply the first to sow the indispensable seed of spiritual freedom.

Let us return to the Polish bishops who asked the German bishops to celebrate the baptism of Prince Mieszko in 966 with them, and let us remember that we are talking about a non-conformist, anti-chauvinist text—condemned by the Party for these very reasons. The bishops evoke the circumstances of this baptism and sketch out their vision of history:

> Such were the beginnings of the history of Christian Poland, and simultaneously the beginnings of its national unity. It is upon these Christian and national foundations that its cultural edifice has been built over a thousand years, by princes, kings, bishops and priests. It is at this moment that the symbiotic relationship between Christianity, the Church and the state in Poland began—a relationship that has never since been broken. In this way each Pole can now say: to be Polish is to be Catholic.

With this statement we have reached the heart of the fundamental paradox of Polish nationalism. It is certain that the bishops wrote this outline of a thousand years of their country's history in perfect good

* See p. 162.

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faith—only a small minority of their followers would have found it questionable; for foreign readers, it amounted to a clichéd image of a Catholic Poland which they had known about for 150 years. However, it is an outline that is not only inaccurate but is in fact untrue.

THERE is another *résumé* of Polish history, offered by Czeslaw Milosz in his book *The History of Polish Literature*:

> To me, the history of Poland and of its literature seems extravagant and full of incongruities: a Slavic nation whose writers, up to the Renaissance, used only Latin; a huge state which, for centuries, stood up to the Teutons, Turkey and Muscovy but, owing to the abuse of its parliamentary system, literally fell apart while its once weaker neighbours partitioned it and erased it from the map of Europe for some 120 years; an astonishingly vital people who sink easily into moronic apathy and who show their virtues only in circumstances which would crush and destroy any other human group; a refinement of taste, which produced lyric poetry comparable to that of Elizabethan England, combined with irony and brilliance but always threatened by drunken torpor and parochial mumblings; habits of religious and political tolerance, acquired in the multidenominational and multinational *Respublica* headed by an elected king, which gave way, as a result of collective misfortunes, to a wounded, morbid nationalism; a country whose loyalties in this second half of the century are courted by two equally matched powers, the Communist Party and the Roman Catholic Church.[1]

The British historian Norman Davies, author of a history of Poland that Polish specialists themselves consider one of the best ever written, called his book *God's Playground* and declares at the outset: " It would be nice to give simple answers to simple questions such as ' Where was Poland? ' or ' Who is a Pole and who is not? ' But I cannot."[2] The Poles tend to believe that their multi-national state, which in the sixteenth century extended as far as the Gulf of Riga, the environs of Moscow and the Black Sea, is the legacy of a union of the ancient crown of Poland with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at the end of the fourteenth century. Polish nationalists willingly claim the first, Piast, dynasty as their heritage, a dynasty that is said to have reigned over an ethnically homogeneous territory. However, the Polish-Lithuanian union was in fact signed between two feudal structures already incorporating different ethnic groups at the time of the signing: Poles, Germans, Jews and Ruthenians on one side, Lithuanians, future Byelorussians and Ukrainians on the other. It was a state but in no sense was it a nation-state; a state with changing frontiers that was a model of religious tolerance in Europe up to the time of the Counter-Reformation. Since the time of the last of the Piasts, Casimir the Great (1333–70), Poland has

[1] Czeslaw Milosz, *The History of Polish Literature* (MacMillan, London, 1969), pp. xiv–xv.

[2] Norman Davies, *God's Playground: a History of Poland* (2 vols.) (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1981), p. xiii.

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included Catholics, Orthodox Christians, Jews, Armenians, and even Muslims. On the eve of its erasure from the European map, the 1789 census showed that there were 53 per cent Roman Catholics, 30 per cent Uniate Catholics (that is, Ukrainians and White-Russians), 4 per cent Orthodox, 11 per cent Jews and 1·5 per cent Protestants. This showed that there were less than 50 per cent ethnic Poles, for the majority of the Lithuanian nobility, frequently Orthodox at the time of the union, had converted to Catholicism before the eighteenth century.

In speaking of culture, Milosz notes that Poland was not originally a product of Roman Catholicism. The Polish vernacular tongue, long suppressed by Latin, the language of the Church, did not come into its own as an instrument of literary expression until the time of the religious controversy provoked first by the ideas of Jan Huss and then by those of Luther and Calvin. Poles too often forget—or do not know—that not much effort was required to make Poland fall definitively into the camp of the Reformation. The Polish Church itself was remarkably tolerant in the face of the spread of Hussite ideas in Poland. At the Council of Constance (1414–18), where Jan Huss was judged and condemned to the stake, only the Polish delegation tried to negotiate a compromise so that this judgment could be avoided. This was even more courageous an attitude given that Poland was exposed to a campaign instigated by the Order of Teutonic Knights, influential in Rome, which accused the Poles of heresy.

As an example, I will cite a Latin poem that the Order circulated which has a certain contemporary paradoxical flavour to it:

> To all schismatics the Pole is allied;
> Are Christians affronted? It must be a Pole.
> Who assassinates priests? Poles again.
> Who insults the Pope? Surely, a Pole.

I would add that it was during this Council of Constance that Pavel Wlodkowic, Rector of the Jagiellonian University of Cracow, set out, before anyone else, a doctrine of national sovereignty. The threat that the Order of Teutonic Knights represented to the Polish-Lithuanian state led him to say that no sovereign state had the right to invade neighbouring states, even if it was done in the name of the true faith. It is enough to substitute " ideology " for " faith " to see how much this doctrine remains pertinent to this part of Europe.

At a time when West European countries observed the principle of *cuius regio eius religio*, King Sigismund Augustus of Poland declared " I am not king of human consciences." In Polish-Lithuanian territory, freedom was assured not only to all Christian denominations, but also to Muslims, Armenians, Karaites and Jews (*paradisus hereticorum*, Poland was also known then as *paradisus judeorum*). The second Polish university, founded in 1505 after the first one at Cracow, was the School of Advanced Jewish Studies in Lublin, " Yeshibot," which was given full academic rights by King Sigismund I.

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Norman Davies points out that the innumerable Polish anti-Trinitarian sects had one feature in common: " the unshakeable belief in the absolute right of unlimited freedom of thought " and he emphasizes their international influence (a curious detail: a large anti-Trinitarian European conference was organized in Cracow in 1550 by the Corsican Francesco Lismanino, confessor to the Queen of Poland, Bona Sforza). The anti-Trinitarians also had strong links with Jewish theologians (Szymon Budny, Lithuanian lord, was considered " the best Hebrew scholar of the century "). Davies writes:

> This Polish-Hebrew cocktail . . . fermented into a mixture of explosive proportions. Translated into Latin in 1681 and later into French and English, it provided the very ammunition which later generations of humanist scholars had long needed to blast the bastions of obscurantism of the established Christian churches. It was exploited at length by Voltaire, by the Encyclopedists in France and by the Deists in England and can thus be regarded as a seminal text of the European Enlightenment and of Tom Paine's Age of Reason.[3]

We can see that before the partitions, the " Polish Republic " much admired by Jean-Jacques Rousseau—hardly resembled the stereotypical image implied by the equation " Pole equals Catholic."

POLISH nationalism developed in captivity throughout the nineteenth century. Its principal characteristic—in relation to Great Russian nationalism and West European nationalisms—was that it was a nationalism of the weak, of victims—the nationalism of a social group whose very identity was threatened. This explains why Poles have such difficulty in admitting that in their past—like in that of all other nations—they have been aggressors or torturers, the " Christ of Nations " in Polish romantic messianism being above suspicion in this respect. The modernization process which, from the Enlightenment onwards, led European monarchies to become nation-states (an all-encompassing category that guarantees a common identifying principle for antagonistic social groups, as subjects and later as citizens) was interrupted in Poland at a critical moment—precisely the moment when it was beginning to take shape. The Poles reacted in different ways. Sometimes by transference (in the psychoanalytic sense) on to men thought of as providential—Napoleon I, Alexander I, or as reassuring and paternal, like Emperor Franz Joseph when Austria annexed part of Poland. It must not be forgotten that of the three occupying powers, Austria alone was Catholic. Russian Poland, subjected to the Tsar who believed in the autocephalous orthodox theory of power inherited from the Byzantine Autocrator, was the part of Poland that experienced the greatest upheavals and the bitterest conflicts in national and religious spheres. The Emperor of Germany, descended from Albert of Hohenzollern,

[3] Norman Davies, op. cit. Vol. 1 p. 192.

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Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, secularized the Order's lands, and joined the camp of the Reformation while remaining " supreme bishop " of the Prussian Church. Under these conditions, it is hardly surprising that, during the nineteenth century, Poles would identify themselves *positively* through their allegiance to the Catholic Church, just as they would identify themselves *negatively* in relation to the occupiers, to neighbouring ethnic groups, and to Jews.

This way of identifying themselves was contested from 1870 onwards by Polish socialists, at first internationalist in outlook, who represented one of the great political currents in Poland (the other being nationalism). We must not forget, however, that the revolutionary song of the Polish socialists, " *Warszawianka*," states: " One day Christ will vanquish Judas!" We realize today that the immunization of the Poles against totalitarianism stems from the privileged role played by the Church in the nineteenth century. Among Polish socialists, the patriotic faction in favour of independence became dominant. As for Polish nationalism, it never dared stand up to the Church, which had always condemned the totalitarian inclinations of nationalist extremists.

It is largely due to the Church that an evolution towards Nazism on the Right and Stalinism on the Left was inconceivable except as a result of conquest.

It is equally true to say that the Polish movement of revolt in 1830 was based on a liberal, romantic platform and was consequently anti-clerical, with Masonic lodges proliferating, in spite of the fact that it would not have been able to develop without the support of the clergy. This was always to be the case. The 1863 rebellion was due to the action of the " Reds " against the " Whites." The 1906 revolution which broke out at Lodz was led by the Polish Socialist Party who demanded independence, while Dmowski's National Party sought only autonomy. It was the socialist Pilsudski who decided to prepare armed warfare against tsarism and who formed the Polish legions who were to fight in their own colours on the Austrian side in the First World War.

The Church's participation in the national struggles of the nineteenth century was nevertheless extremely important and even more heroic when one realizes that it mostly took place against the advice of the Vatican, which at that time defended the ruling order. At the beginning of the 1830 Uprising, Pope Gregory XIV gave a severe warning to the Polish clergy: " The Church holds in horror the clash of arms and the sounds of rebellion. It strictly forbids Ministers of God—who came to bring peace on earth—to engage in any activity that compromises the tranquillity of the state." This was not enough for Nicholas II and Metternich, who asked the Holy Pontiff for a formal condemnation of the Uprising. He did this with the *brevis* " *Cum Primum* " in 1832, after the Polish insurrection had failed, asking Catholics to submit to the Tsar's authority, which, he said, " would reveal his goodness." His hopes were not fulfilled: there was brutal repression and the Polish clergy was severely hit (the abolition of the status of the Polish Primate; the

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closure of 200 monasteries and cloisters; the exile of many priests to the interior of the Empire). It seems, however, that the Polish Church could not have stayed outside national struggles, even if it had wanted to. On the eve of the 1863 rebellion, the Archbishop of Warsaw Monsignor Felinski, a dyed-in-the-wool conservative, wrote to Pius IX deploring the aid given by the clergy to the National Central Committee, which represented the supporters of armed struggle. " What most disturbs right-thinking people," he wrote " is that some priests comply with this Committee, promising to support their action and involve the peasants who, on the whole, prefer to remain uninvolved." Six months later, on 22 January 1863, the rebellion broke out. Archbishop Felinski still seemed disturbed. He wrote to the Secretary of State Cardinal Antonelli:

> I am far from sure that the Polish Church is in a healthy state, and this is due less to the obstacles continually placed in front of its free development by the Russian government than to a fanatic patriotism, so strong that it absorbs the religious spirit not only of secular people but even of Ministers of the Church . . . Poles would disobey the Holy Seat itself if it tried to make them accept the three legitimate governments.

Finally, even the Archbishop became involved. He wrote to the Tsar asking him " to make Poland an independent nation." By way of reply, the Tsar expelled him from Warsaw and exiled him to Jaroslaw where he spent 20 years under house arrest. The Poles have always treated him as a martyr, although he was, in fact, the involuntary hero of a failed revolution . . .

THE dialogue between the secular Left and the Church, so ardently desired by Adam Michnik and unthinkable in pre-war Poland, notably because of the " Pole equals Catholic " syndrome (aid given to the ONR-Falanga by some members of the clergy, anti-semitic declarations by the Polish Primate Cardinal Hlond) was begun under the German occupation thanks to the clergy's massive participation in the Resistance (thousands of priests were killed or imprisoned by the Nazis). Another factor was that the all-too-few efforts made to save Jews from extermination came from the Church and lay Catholics. In his book *The Terrible Secret: Suppression of the Truth about Hitler's Final Solution*, Walter Laqueur writes:

> That there has been a great deal of anti-semitism in modern Polish history is not a matter of dispute, but it is also true that help was extended to the Jews after 1939 by some who had been their bitterest enemies before . . . If the Poles showed less sympathy and solidarity with Jews than many Danes and Dutch, they behaved far more humanely than Rumanians or Ukrainians, than Lithuanians and Latvians. A comparison with France would be by no means unfavourable for Poland. In view of the Polish pre-war attitudes

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towards Jews, it is not surprising that there was so little help, but that there was so much.[4]

Paradoxically, the communist Poland that emerged from the Yalta agreements corresponded to an old dream of the Polish nationalist Right of the most extreme kind. Poland is on Piast land, has " recovered " the lands of Slavic peoples taken over by the Teutons since the Middle Ages. It is—for the first time in its history—a country of one ethnic group and one religion, with all faiths other than Catholicism accounting for only a tiny percentage of the population. The support given to the regime by Boleslaw Piasecki, leader of the nationalist far-Right who founded the group " Pax " of pro-regime Catholics (when imprisoned by the Russians, he apparently managed to convince Beria himself of the merits of this organization), has a sort of deep-seated logic. Just like in the nineteenth century, the successive revolts against the regime were begun by intellectuals of the secular Left and were combated by the hardliners in the regime with anti-semitic slogans, whose symbolic value had become even more significant in a country where nearly all the Jews had been exterminated by the Nazis. In 1956, the hardliners tried to represent advocates of reform as Jews, as former Stalinists falsely converted to liberalism. In 1968, in the face of student revolt, the group hoping for power (led by General Moczar, then Minister of Internal Affairs) again launched an anti-semitic campaign under the guise of anti-Zionism. We know what Solidarity owed to the intellectuals and the KOR activists: we know the regime's response and the amalgam of anti-semitism and xenophobia directed against them.

One can therefore say that one of the rare merits of the communist regime is to have drawn the most odious aspects of Polish nationalism into its ranks. There is nothing more Polish nor more Catholic than Solidarity's revolt: but it seems to me to be purified of the detestable elements present in the " Pole equals Catholic " syndrome.

For the first time in a hundred years, Polish Catholicism is no longer competing with a belief of unequal strength, for the socialist ideology, Catholicism's major rival up until the last war, has been compromised by the abuse of power in the name of socialism.

All that Jaruzelski's junta could find to inspire a " reconciliation " is to promote PRON— the " Patriotic Front for National Rebirth." Pétain and his Vichy propagandists could hardly have put it better.

[4] Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret: Suppression of the Truth about Hitler's Final Solution* (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1981), pp. 106–107.

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Poland and the Logic of Solidarity

Henry Norr

NEAL ASCHERSON's *The Polish August** is an important but peculiarly frustrating book. Not surprisingly, it has drawn enthusiastic reviews in such journals as the *New York Review of Books* and the *New York Times Book Review*. As an account of the upheaval that began with the shipyard strikes of 1980 and ended with the imposition of martial law, it is comprehensive and timely. Its author, a British journalist who has covered Poland's recurrent crises since the days of Gomulka, knows the tangled history of the Polish United Workers' Party, and of the society it ruled, well enough to put the rise of Solidarity into perspective. The questions around which he organizes his review of post-war politics, as well as his sympathetic but not uncritical discussion of Solidarity, are surely the central ones; could Poland, despite all the political and economic obstacles it faces, still have managed to govern itself by consent instead of by coercion? Was the moderate socialist democracy that most Poles (and Ascherson, too) seem to want, really an historical possibility, or only a " chimera nourished by hope "? How was this ideal to be sought, and what has so often and so tragically obstructed its realization?

But for all its promise Ascherson's book is, in the end, a disappointment. The problem is not that his text does not anticipate the generals' *coup*—that would have been too much to ask. Unfortunately, the book fails in a deeper sense, because it is built around an assessment of the record of Polish communism that is untenable, and an analysis of the Polish opposition that is not only wrong but ultimately offensive.

Without doubt, the book is a valuable survey, in convenient and dramatic form. Nearly half of it is devoted to a succinct history of the Polish state over the past four decades. In comparison to Daniel Singer's account in *The Road to Gdansk*, Ascherson is much more thorough. While Singer's focus is on the workers, Ascherson concentrates on the Party. He traces its evolution through three separate cycles (1944–56; 1956–70; and 1971–80) during which bright hopes and promises of reform gradually gave way to degeneration, disillusionment, revolt and collapse.

In passing, he also analyses the development of the intellectual opposition, from the Marxist " revisionism " of 1956, through to the despair that followed the anti-semitic and anti-intellectual campaign of 1968, and up to the birth of KOR and its strategy of rebuilding " civil society " outside Party control. An interesting, if misplaced and somewhat fragmented, chapter called " Antecedents and Analyses "

* Neal Ascherson, *The Polish August: the Self-Limiting Revolution*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1981; Viking, New York, 1982.

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surveys previous workers' revolts under socialism, as well as several critical Marxist interpretations of the class character of the Soviet-bloc regimes.

While his long narrative of the strike at the Lenin Shipyard lacks Singer's passion, Ascherson—who was apparently present at the scene—provides many details that convey something of the texture of the experience. His descriptions of the actual negotiations (carried on while " huge boiler-makers chewed green apples and Western photographers with long hair stared and made faces " through a glass wall) preserve the tensions and ironies communicated so powerfully by " Workers '80," the Polish documentary filmed at the time.

Though respectful, Ascherson is hardly inclined to idealize the strike leadership or the agreements themselves. Divisions, confusions, and shifts of mood among the strikers, touches of demagogy on the part of Lech Walesa, tensions between the workers and the intellectuals who came as " experts " to advise them, oversights and textual ambiguities that were later to plague the young Union, all receive candid and balanced treatment. And Ascherson remembers that not all the action took place on the Baltic coast. With vignettes of the divided and increasingly desperate Politburo in Warsaw, he reconstructs the debates in which the Party leaders confronted their dilemmas and worked out their strategies, such as they were.

PERHAPS the most useful parts of *The Polish August* are the chapters on the crises and compromises that marked the Union's short life. Readers for whom the whole sequence has become a blur will appreciate Ascherson's effort to sort out the commitments and betrayals, warning strikes and last-minute settlements, plenums and congresses, Soviet threats and American warnings, that kept Poland on the world's front pages for 18 months.

As is to be expected in a work of instant history, Ascherson's analysis of the patterns which emerged during these tumultuous months is uncertain and often vague. Sometimes he is hopeful about " the ideology of patriotic compromise " and what he regards as an alliance of moderates (Kania and Jaruzelski, Walesa, and the Church). Sometimes he despairs over the paralysis of the Party and state. And he repeatedly falls back on a not very illuminating metaphor: after the " volcano," " the lava was still flowing, and nothing permanent could be erected until it had stopped "; " nobody could yet be certain when or where the Polish lava-flow would come to rest "; etc. His analytical passages are replete, too, with spatial images suggesting the abyss: throughout the book the common grounds are too narrow, the gaps are too wide, and vacuums abound on all sides. By the end of 1981, he concludes in an all-too-brief post-*coup* " Afterword," ". . . the crisis . . . overcame the very limited resources for compromise and mediation that were available in the Polish system."

There is something curiously impersonal and deterministic about this

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language. It may well be that the Polish renewal was fated to fail, given the magnitude of the economic débâcle and what are delicately called " geo-political realities." But fate has its agents, and we need to be clearer than Ascherson manages to be about where responsibility for the tragedy lies. When he writes that, " The gap between the two sides was simply too wide to allow a ' social contract ' on the basis of the Gdansk and Szczecin Agreements," what he really means is that the rulers—in effect, the leadership of the PUWP—refused to share their power with the freely chosen representatives of the Polish people.

Ascherson is certainly critical of the PUWP's performance. He recognizes " the awful mental bankruptcy of the Party leadership " and shows how their incoherent and provocative policies continually exacerbated tensions. He sees that it was the reluctance of the authorities to carry out the terms of the agreements that undermined the possibility of the " patriotic compromise " to which Solidarity was committed. Far from joining the chorus of distant observers who blame the Union for " going too far," he argues that its political initiatives in the autumn of 1981 were reluctant responses to the Party's failures.

But only in the newly appended " Afterword " does he finally acknowledge explicitly that the Party would accept no significant redistribution of power, and that it was this obstinate refusal that stymied and eventually doomed all efforts to achieve a compromise. Even then, Ascherson qualifies this conclusion with the argument that ultimate responsibility lies with the Soviets, for " blindly refusing to permit the PUWP to share power and attempt a quite new interpretation of its leading role." He also suggests that it was pressure from the Party's " terrified and divided following " (along with mistrust on Solidarity's part) that prevented the negotiation of a political accord during 1981. Implicit in these formulations is the assumption that the majority of the Party leadership, if left to work out its own relationship with the Union, would have preferred genuine power-sharing.

Nothing in Ascherson's account, however, supports this rosy view of the leaders' intentions. Significant sections of the Party *rank and file* did support compromise and renewal, and perhaps " centrists " like Kania and Jaruzelski, and establishment " liberals " like Rakowski, at one time hoped sincerely for the same result. True, there were pressures from the Soviets, and the manoeuvres of " hardliners " like Olszowski, and what Ascherson calls " the tendency of eager, stupid officials and policemen to take precipitate actions."

The fact remains, though, that in practice the ruling group in Warsaw never really accepted the outcome of August 1980. They implemented only a few of the provisions of the Baltic Accords (reprinted as appendices to *The Polish August*). Throughout the 16 months of Solidarity's existence, they pursued confrontational policies that were no less destructive for being erratic and ineffective. Even after the Party's Extraordinary Ninth Congress in July 1981, the authorities failed, in Ascherson's words, to " take decisive action for a *rapprochement* with

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Solidarity or to devise a coherent programme for economic recovery." And in the end they only pretended to negotiate. Their plan for a front of national unity, which Jaruzelski presented to Walesa and Archbishop Glemp in November 1981, was a patent sham (although Ascherson, even after 13 December, clings to the illusion that it was merely a " tough opening position "): in Jaruzelski's front, Solidarity would have become a feeble partner to the Party, burdened with responsibility but, with only one vote out of seven, lacking any real power. If the purpose of this proposal was debatable at the time, after the *coup* it was unmistakable: to shift blame for the impasse to Solidarity, to increase frustration and division within the movement, and to stall for time until winter set in and the generals and police were ready to wage their war on society.

Surely Ascherson is right that Moscow bears ultimate responsibility for the catastrophe—whatever the exact role of Brezhnev and company, without their support the Warsaw authorities could hardly have undertaken an operation of the military and political magnitude of 13 December. But in the perspective of history, and in the eyes of the Polish people, Jaruzelski and the Party will carry their own large share of responsibility, too, for the intransigence, incompetence, duplicity, and finally the brutality with which they responded to Solidarity's challenge. It makes more sense to blame geography than, say, geology, but neither can justify the sorry record of the Party machine.

A SIMILARLY ambiguous view of the nature of the PUWP also mars Ascherson's discussion of pre-Solidarity Poland. In his treatment of the formative period at the close of the Second World War, he argues not only that a close alliance binding Poland to Soviet policies was inevitable, but that the communists alone had an effective programme for bringing about the democratization and development of the country. He contends that, " Stalin did not intend to ' sovietize ' Eastern Europe "; astonishingly, he cites Stalin's arrangements with Hitler to abolish Poland altogether, as well as the General Secretary's 1938 orders to dissolve the Communist Party of Poland and murder its leaders, as evidence that " Stalin was certainly open-minded about the future constitution of the Polish state." Ascherson asserts that, until 1948, Gomulka's " moderate, open and responsive form of socialism was thoroughly successful " and on the way to public acceptance. According to Ascherson, only when the Americans "launched the Cold War " did Stalin decide to disturb this idyllic situation. These are, to say the least, debatable conclusions about a period marked by the suppression of the broad-based Home Army, the destruction of the Peasant and Polish Socialist Parties, the ratification of communist predominance through fraudulent elections, and the establishment of tight Soviet and Party control of the repressive apparatus. (Leszek Kolakowski stressed this point in his review of the book in the *New Republic* of 14 April 1982.) It is certainly true that Gomulka's first regime was different from the police terror that followed, but it is also

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true that it was under him that the groundwork for the Party dictatorship was created.

Ascherson thinks that 1956 was " the great missed chance of post-war Polish history." With the entire nation behind him, Gomulka had an opportunity, as Ascherson sees it, " to return to the experiment he had half-completed by the time of his overthrow in 1948, to carry through the principles of October until the Party exercised only a guiding role over a society allowed to express its own initiatives in almost every field."

Here again there is a distinct contradiction between Ascherson's portrayal of Gomulka and the Party, and the historical record he details. He ridicules the argument that Gomulka always intended, in 1956, to betray the trust of the nation. But Ascherson's own account reveals that Gomulka's mission, as conceived both in his own mind and by the Polish and Soviet leaders who reluctantly agreed to his return, was to " cool the furnace of popular excitement " and " control . . . pressure for a ' second stage ' of ' the October '." The workers' councils, Ascherson concedes, were manipulated by Gomulka's supporters until " they were no longer indispensable but merely a problem in the way of the Party's reassertion of control over the masses." *Po Prostu*, the critical journal which Ascherson calls " brilliant and fearless " was suppressed as soon as " Gomulka felt strong enough."

Among the opposition intellectuals, Ascherson notes, it was 1968—the year of the repression of student demonstrations, followed by a vicious campaign against the " Zionists "—that destroyed the last hopes of reform from above, i.e. through the Party. " A whole generation of intellectual opposition—that sceptical, *marxisant*, anti-clerical tradition . . . .—died under the clubs of the police in March," Ascherson writes. But the author himself is strangely reluctant to admit that the reformist—in Polish parlance, " revisionist "—hopes of 1956 were misplaced. He speaks favourably of Mieczyslaw Rakowski, the " liberal " editor and current deputy Prime Minister, whom he labels " one of the very few defenders of the ideals of 1956 left in the PUWP." There is some sad irony in the fact that Rakowski has become a vocal, if rather pathetic, apologist for the " state of war."[1]

Ascherson never quite explains why, in his judgment, Gomulka did not live up to the hopes placed in him. It would be easy to blame Khrushchev's Russia, as he finally blames Brezhnev's for the latest crackdown, but Ascherson rejects this view: Gomulka, he writes, " could have gone on to build the most heretical and libertarian kind of socialist regime compatible with a one-party state *without fearing Soviet intervention* " (emphasis added). All Ascherson can point to is the phenomenon he repeatedly calls the " incompleteness " of Polish politics. This " curse of post-war Poland " is blamed for leaving intact an entrenched and privileged bureaucratic " middle apparatus " with the power and motivation to block any real reform. To explain

[1] Cf. " Rakowski and Solidarity," in *Poland Under Jaruzelski*, Part I, pp. 182–189.

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Gomulka's conservatism after 1956 by the " incompleteness " of de-Stalinization, as the author does at one point, is mere tautology. What Ascherson usually seems to mean when he speaks of " incompleteness " is the " relative mildness " of Polish Stalinism. The apparatus, he says, " had never been sufficiently intimidated to ensure their compliance " with reforms from above. In the face of this curious argument, one cannot help but wonder if the inertia of the Soviet bureaucracy is to be explained by some " incompleteness " of Stalinism in the USSR!

As for arguments that the trust placed in Gomulka in 1956 was based on a fatal misunderstanding of the nature of communist power, and that the vision of a democratized and responsive " reform Communism " was only a cruel illusion, Ascherson dismisses them out of hand. They are, he charges, expressions of " neo-conservative ideology " used to defame liberal Marxists (even the name of Allende is invoked) and to discredit the idea of democratic socialism.

The problem, however, is not just one of the motives of the reform communists (although, as we have seen, the evidence scarcely justifies Ascherson's scorn for the " betrayal " argument). The real issue is the class nature of the systems that these reformers have to face. Many Marxist as well as non-Marxist critics have come to argue that the upper levels of the apparatus constitute a new class that uses its control of the state and of the means of production to exercise a form of class rule unforeseen by Marx. If that is the case, it follows that democracy—or even just any independent social organization—threatens not only the privileges, but the very foundations of this class. Hence the apparatus will resist any attempt to institutionalize genuine popular initiative, whether that involves democratization of the Party or state, or, as in the earlier conceptions of KOR and Solidarity, simply " societal pluralism " achieved through the co-existence with the Party-state of self-governing social movements. The authorities then should be expected to use all the weapons that other ruling classes use to defend their positions—including intimidation, deception, and, if need be, massive repression. When struggling with the contradictions in his interpretation of Gomulka and 1956, Ascherson never confronts such analyses of the conservatism inherent in Soviet-style systems.

WHAT is disturbing about Ascherson's account is not that he dares to probe the sub-surface tensions within the extraordinary alliance that was Solidarity, but that he approaches these issues with a certain worldly cynicism that verges on condescension towards Polish aspirations. In a concluding section entitled " Hindsights," he portrays the Polish people as beset by " total confusion over what was real and what was not." For Ascherson, Poland, even in its ferment of renewal, was a " thick darkness " in which " the instinct of most people was simply to grope backwards to the last solid object they could remember touching "—for most, the Church and the " reassuringly firm . . . simple monuments of traditional Polish nationalism." Because Poland's

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post-war protests have had to be limited, they engendered, Ascherson argues (citing the Polish sociologist Stefan Nowak), a " high incidence of authoritarian and punitive attitudes " expressed in interpersonal aggression.

As a description of Solidarity and the political culture it embodied, this is downright patronizing. More important, it is also inaccurate. The demoralization, passivity, pretence and sham that came to characterize Polish life before 1980 have been widely noted (though few have gone so far as to argue, as Ascherson does, that " by the late 1970s it was not even clear where real power lay "). Ascherson, however, never clearly distinguishes the very different Poland born in the summer of 1980 from what preceded it. Solidarity was above all a rebellion *against* the confusion and corruption over which the Party presided. In its demands, its songs,[2] and its spirit, Solidarity insisted that renewal begin with a return to concreteness and truth, to simplicity and common sense. For Poles, the essence of the revolution was " *odklamywanie* " — defalsification. In Solidarity's short life there was no moment more revealing than the opening of negotiations with Jagielski in August 1980:

> " These strikes must be terminated," the Deputy Premier commanded.
>
> " They should have been a long time ago," Walesa shot back, " but we have been waiting for you. What is your position on our twenty-one demands?"
>
> " Allow me to begin by making some general points . . . ," began Jagielski.
>
> " No," answered Walesa, interrupting. " I want a concrete answer, point by point."
>
> The crowd outside, listening over the public-address system, exploded into applause.[3]

LIKE all revolutions, Solidarity was conditioned by the *milieu* in which it originated, and no doubt there was confusion and sometimes deception on its side. But by all accounts there was also a tremendous burst of candour and creativity in all spheres of Polish life. Ascherson waxes poetic about darkness, fog and smoke, but he seems somehow to have missed the light that flared so briefly.

As for religion and nationalism, Ascherson treats them as alternatives to the clarity of vision he finds lacking—or at best as havens to which the Poles could retreat, " like fugitives out of a smoke-filled building," before planning a way forward. Such perspectives come naturally to secularized and cosmopolitan Westerners, but by now it ought to be clear that, whether we like it or not, for the overwhelming majority of Poles,

[2] " Postulat 22: Songs from the New Polish Labour Movement," Folkways Records, New York, 1981.

[3] For an account of this exchange, see Denis MacShane, *Solidarity: Poland's Independent Trade Union* (Spokesman, Nottingham, 1981), pp. 23–24.

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Catholicism, nationalism and social justice are of a piece. They turn to ritual and tradition not, as Ascherson implies, because they do not yet know how to reconstruct society, but precisely because their vision of a new order includes (among other things) acknowledgement of the central role that faith and patriotism have always played in the national culture. Certainly much that was negative about Polish history and the Church has been repressed from the collective memory, and no doubt religion and nationalism often—perhaps again today—serve as substitutes for social change. But that was hardly their function in 1980–81.

Ascherson is right, of course, that Solidarity's revolution lacked a blueprint. On economic questions especially, the movement was divided and unsure of itself. In its last few months Solidarity began to splinter over strategy, too, as the obstinacy of the authorities strained confidence in the only approach the movement ever really had, the line of self-limiting revolution in the framework of accommodation with the Party-state. But as for the fundamental social values to be realized, there was much more clarity than Ascherson finds. The themes—democracy, egalitarianism, freedom of speech and conscience—are all enshrined in the Twenty-One Demands. Or they can be found in the very sociology Ascherson cites. He quotes Nowak about frustration and punitiveness, but omits his 1981 observation that these were phenomena especially of the late Gierek years and that " in the past few months much of the interpersonal irritation and aggressiveness has disappeared. People are being nice to one another. . . ."[4] He neglects also the central argument of the article he refers to: that all classes and generations in Poland share, with some differences of emphasis, a homogeneous system of values. Nowak's characterization of these values and attitudes, synthesized from pre-1980 survey research, shows what went into Solidarity's social vision, besides religion and nationalism:

> . . . ' democratic values ' are placed high in people's hierarchy. They are preceded only by values like ' equal chances in life for all ' and ' good living conditions for all,' and they themselves precede the idea of ' moderate equality of income,' . . . In the first place among these democratic values we can find ' freedom of speech ' and ' a say for all citizens in the way the country is governed.'[5]

In line with Ascherson's observations, Nowak notes that since the Second World War " new factors in the crystallization of values have not worked effectively enough to form satisfactorily cohesive axiological structures " [!]. Specifically, he does perceive that the Poles had a " rather confused concept of the institutional structures which could help them in the implementation of [their] values," as well as some difficulty in translating democratic predispositions into a code of personal practice (not surprising in a state where democracy was hardly

[4] Stefan Nowak, " Values and Attitudes of the Polish People," *Scientific American*, Vol. 245, No. 1, July 1981.

[5] Stefan Nowak, " A Polish Self-Portrait," *Polish Perspectives*, February 1981.

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permitted to exist). But on the whole the picture Nowak sketches of the mentality out of which Solidarity was born is far different from the "total darkness" Ascherson observes. Designing a set of social institutions that would both incorporate these popular values and take account of political realities was indeed a perplexing task, especially given the attitude of the authorities.

It is easy, now, to point to Solidarity's illusions and miscalculations. However, it had a noble vision, and though its strategy failed, one is hard put to imagine—Ascherson gives no indication—a strategy that could have worked better in realizing its ideals, given what we now know about the secret intentions of the authorities. If the hopes ignited by the Polish August are dying, it is not because of real or imagined deficiencies in the logic of Solidarity and the people it represented, but because they have been crushed by the might of an apparatus that proved more able and willing to deceive and destroy than to share its power.

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On Conquest

Czeslaw Milosz

IT is very likely that the human race is reaching an era in which the notion of the human will equal that of ridicule. Alas, for me this is no whim, but is rather the conclusion drawn from my experiences in the latter half of this century. It seems as though we should have taken the predictions of science fiction seriously. Its authors alerted us to the dangers of a revolt by machines that could reduce man to servitude, and they familiarized us with the term " robot " created by the Czech writer Karel Capek, derived from " *robota* " meaning " work " in Slavic languages, and close to " *rab* " meaning " slave.".

As with all predictions, this one is coming true in a somewhat contrary fashion. For it is not so much the naïve attribution of will-power to machines that is threatening mankind, so much as social systems of which man is no longer in control, equipped with computers given over to the security police, with tanks and helicopters. Resistance by men without weapons is ridiculous because weakness is ridiculous. In this we are close to a new—or perhaps a very old—definition of Man: a being who imagines himself set above the angels, but who, once scarred by blows and trodden on, realizes that he is of no significance at all.

It is possible that the innumerable phrases of our wordy century only serve to cover up one fundamental problem: that of the source of power. For a long time, the power of kings was granted by God, and we should try to understand the fear felt by so many people at the news of the beheading of Louis XVI two centuries ago. The following century was dominated by the splendid rhetoric of the will of the people as the source of power. It was the epoch of parliaments, or more correctly, of the striving to establish parliaments where there were none—that is, the desire for government exercised by a democratically elected parliamentary majority.

No one is surprised any longer that, throughout the world, the rhetoric of free elections has lost its directness and spontaneity; that it is experienced as something slightly annoying, that regimes based on the division of power into legislative, executive and judicial branches have, above all, recourse to the argument that they represent a lesser evil than their rivals, who do not observe these divisions in the first place.

On the other hand, the idea of conquest as a source of power is making a triumphal advance. It is rare, however, for this advance to be made in a stark, and therefore frightening, way. On the contrary, the verbose character of our age is largely due to the desire to cover up the terrifying nakedness of the political fact with countless smoke-screens.

Conquest, from the outside, or a take-over from the inside, can be recognized by two essential components. First, an organized minority,

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for instance the army or a political party, seizes power—not necessarily by force; it can also be done by ruse or blackmail. Then, once power has been seized, institutional changes are made and a police apparatus of such power installed that the people are reduced to a passive mass, robbed of all means of resistance. Thus the organized group keeps power once and for all.

Twentieth-century intellectuals have expended much energy on providing theoretical justifications for conquest, presenting the charismatic group that takes power as the " real," though unconscious, will of the people. The extremely seductive rhetoric of revolution has the goal of permanently concealing this seizure of power. The Russian revolution was a take-over from the inside, led to its conclusion by the specific conditions of a war which was dragging on and which Russia was losing. From this moment on in Russia, there was no possibility of seizing the monopoly of power from the Party.

German National-Socialism is another classic example of an internal take-over, even if it was ratified by a majority vote in parliament, because it was accompanied by an operation which aimed simultaneously to terrorize and seduce public opinion. It paved the way for a totalitarian system destined to last for a thousand years, and which would possibly still be in existence if the war had not decided otherwise.

LET us not be insincere: to shed tears over what happed in Poland over a year ago amounts to more or less the same thing as to deplore the laws of gravity or thermodynamics. Half of Europe, including Poland, was given a new regime quite simply because a conquering army was occupying these countries, pushing the frontiers of the Soviet Empire further towards the West. In these countries, the concentration of all power in the hands of one party became dogma, preventing the participation in government of any persons or groups outside the control of the party.

If the Polish experience—first Solidarity, followed by the state of war—has so moved so many hearts and minds in the West, it is no doubt because the thesis of the Party as the *avant-garde* of the proletariat, in other words, of the mystical link between ruler and ruled, has suddenly been revealed as pure rhetoric by the concrete example of one country's experience.

We may finally have the answer to the question of what happens if the real will of the people—10 million members of an independent trade union—turns against the monopoly of power, and demands *some* of the rights that their rulers enjoy (*only some*, for the Poles have displayed too much realism and self-discipline to be suspected of trying to get rid of the Party as the spokesman for their membership of the Soviet bloc). The exposure of the military junta's actions in the name of the Party introduces a new element only because it reveals the essence of any system whose goal is power for power's sake.

Over the course of history, man has often been exposed to the

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omnipotence of the state often wanting control over his private life. However, prior to the twentieth century, he has never had to face such an anonymous monster, of which the metaphoric equivalent is clearly the computer of science fiction. A growing symbiosis between the apparatus of power and the technical apparatus serving it can now be seen. In Poland, a country which has been economically destroyed, where people are short of food and medicines, the police has at its disposal ultra-modern electronic equipment—which is also an indication of how Western credits are used in this part of Europe.

My audience may remember the adventures of Tintin and Captain Haddock in *Tintin on the Moon*. This prophetic cartoon was situated in Syldavia, a country where peasants wear clogs made of bark and get around in wagons drawn by oxen, yet which manages to send a rocket to the moon. Let me add that the transformation of our whole planet into a Syldavia is not totally out of the question.

I am not speaking here to defend the so-called " Polish cause." My part of Europe, wrongly called eastern for it is really central Europe, forms a geographical and cultural whole, with the architectural monuments of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Baroque attesting to its common history. The fate of each of these countries will be exactly the same as that of its neighbours, and nationalism must be avoided, for it only serves the rulers, who use the old principle of *divide et impera*. A year of the state of war in Poland has simply provided us with some lessons which transcend the boundaries of one single country, as was the case after the Prague Spring of 1968 when Soviet tanks carried out their sinister " normalization."

The notion of the human escapes definition, but becomes concrete when the behaviour of an individual provides an example. A young boy arrested for carrying leaflets protesting against the state of war is given a choice: he will get a five-year prison sentence unless he signs a declaration of loyalty that allows him to go home. He does not sign. In the eyes of the security police officer who has given him the choice, the act of refusal is absurd, since the world operates in such a way that everything is decided by brute force and—says the officer—it is on our side; we are its representatives.

This collision between the anonymous determinism represented by the officer and the freedom of the lonely prisoner contains the whole existential problem. The act of refusal is not based on anything, does not emerge from any possible calculation; all arguments oppose it, except this voice from inside that forbids surrendering under pressure from victorious violence.

WE are all heirs to the Bible, and we recognize this archetypal situation: the Just is confronted by the powers of this world, who laugh at his loyalty to a message from elsewhere. These powers are: the Egypt of the Pharaohs in *Exodus*; the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar in the

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Book of Daniel; the Roman Empire of the last books of the *Old Testament*, of the *Gospel* and the *Apocalypse*.

The Bible is full of examples of the miraculous triumph of the Just and the humiliation of their persecutors: the Red Sea engulfs the Pharaoh's army; the three adolescents thrown into the burning oven emerge safe and sound; the prisoner crowned with thorns and spat upon by Roman soldiers, treated derisively as a king, is, in fact, still a king, whereas only the ruins of the Roman Empire now remain.

However, the self-assurance of those who serve material force does not change, and their cackling echoes louder than ever. Their boasts remain topical and can be quoted from the Greek *Book of Wisdom* of the second or first century BC, where, in the second chapter, one can read:

> May our strength become the law of justice for weakness is useless. Let us seek out the Just, because he disturbs us and opposes our conduct, because he reproaches us for our failings before the Law and accuses us of betraying what we have been taught . . . Let us see if his words are true, let us examine what will happen to him in the end. If the Just is the son of God, God will help him, and deliver him from his enemies. Let us test him through insulting and tormenting him, and we will thus know his gentleness and see his humility. Let us condemn him to an ignoble death, because, he tells us, he will be saved.

The whole Bible is a voice of hope. To the iron determinism of this world, it opposes the ever-present possibility of freedom, for the divine and the human cannot be separated, and the Just is named Son of God. The suffering and death of the persecuted do not indicate the triumph of our oppressors, for one can die and still be saved. In twentieth-century totalitarian regimes, imposed by force, man is generally deprived of the support given by the great biblical hope of temporal or posthumous reward.

One can of course say that only non-believers are without this hope and that atheistic humanism is, in spite of itself, preparing the advent of totalitarianism on a planetary scale, for it recognizes universal determinism, while there are many believers whose free will is comforted by their faith. This suggestion seems doubtful to me, however, because the erosion of certain notions affects us all. God remains hidden and it is not only to atheists that he no longer speaks of punishments and rewards. Catholics themselves no longer say, as did Corneille's Polyeucte, " But in heaven, the palm is already prepared." Paradoxically, a new kind of human community emerges out of this, founded on the same deprivation, the same sense of lack. There is nothing more telling than the participation of non-believers in Poland in mass religious rites and pilgrimages—and it would be a mistake to attribute this to political motives alone. " Religion," as a Polish essayist pointed out, " fulfils the function of being the only infallible referential system in a situation where mistrust is absolute and without exception."

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" Mistrust, absolute and without exception," of each individul and, above him, of the state whose actions can in no way be influenced by the individual and he knows that they will not be: this is what defines the life of the people who live in my part of Europe. Those of us who tried to tell the truth about the essence of the system that had been imposed, Polish, Hungarian, Czech writers, met—and still meet—with a kind of mistrust in the West, as if they had violated the powerful taboo of progressive thought.

AND it is true that our knowledge is dangerous. For it signifies the end of rhetoric so dear to twentieth-century intellectuals and which reaches into that which has not yet been named but which emerges as a threat to human essence itself. It is indeed tempting to believe that God's silence means that history repeats biblical archetypes, so that man can get rid of the hubris of progress, so that he can discover his isolation in the face of the state and read again what the Bible says of Egypt, Babylon and Rome.

Yet men's ridiculous powerlessness is again and again denied by his acts of loyalty to himself in spite of everything, for we feel that these acts are integral to the nature of the development of the world, although nobody knows how much time will pass before they bear fruit. Events like the Hungarian Uprising of 1956, the Prague Spring of 1968, Solidarity in Poland, were important attempts to escape the power of lies and retrieve human dignity, accomplished by men who were believed to be too crushed to be able to react.

Each of these successive movements managed to reach greater depths, to involve an increasingly massive number of workers. Thus the totalitarian state nourishes an enemy in its breast, an avenger of those it degrades. It is an illusion to hope that the unsteady balance that has been established in the monarchies of Central and Western Europe and that characterizes democracies—the balance between the will of the rulers and the pressure exerted by the ruled—can be achieved under this regime.

The past year in Poland has clearly demonstrated the only acceptable form of relationship there between the governing minority and the governed majority.

In the end, all that is left of the glorious dreams of ending the alienation and the exploitation of man by man is one message, one demand which is addressed to the human race: man must not surrender.

(*This text is based on a lecture the author gave at the Sorbonne, Paris.*)

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Glossary

AK	—*the Home Army*
ChSS	—*Christian Social Association*
KPP	—*Polish Communist Party*
KOR	—*Workers' Defence Committee/Social Self-Defence Committee*
KOS	—*The Committee for Social Resistance*
KPN	—*Confederation of Independent Poland*
KW	—*County Command (Military)*
MKS	—*Inter-Factory Strike Committee*
MO	—*Civil Militia/People's Militia*
MSW	—*Ministry of Internal Affairs*
ORMO	—*Voluntary Reserve of the Civil Militia*
Pax	—*organization of "progressive" lay Catholic intellectuals*
PPS	—*Polish Socialist Party*
PRL	—*Polish People's Republic*
PRON	—*Patriotic Movement for National Revival*
PZKS	—*Polish Catholic Social Union*
PZPR/PUWP	—*Polish United Workers' Party*
RKW	—*Regional (underground) Solidarity leadership*
RMP	—*Communist Youth*
ROMO	—*Reserve Units of the Riot Police*
ROPCiO	—*Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights*
SB	—*Security Services*
Seym	—*Polish parliament*
SKS	—*Students' Defence Committee*
TKK	—*Temporary Coordinating Commission of Solidarity*
TKN	—*Flying University*
TUR	—*Association of Workers' Universities*
UB	—*Security Police*
Ubek	—*Security Policeman*
Voevodship	—*an administrative region*
Voevoda	—*chief officer of the region*
WiN	—*Liberty and Independence—name of an underground organization formed in Poland in September 1945 after the dissolution of the Home Army*
WOP	—*Border Guards*
WRON	—*Military Council of National Salvation* (WRONa *means "crow")*
ZOMO	—*Riot Police*

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Our Contributors

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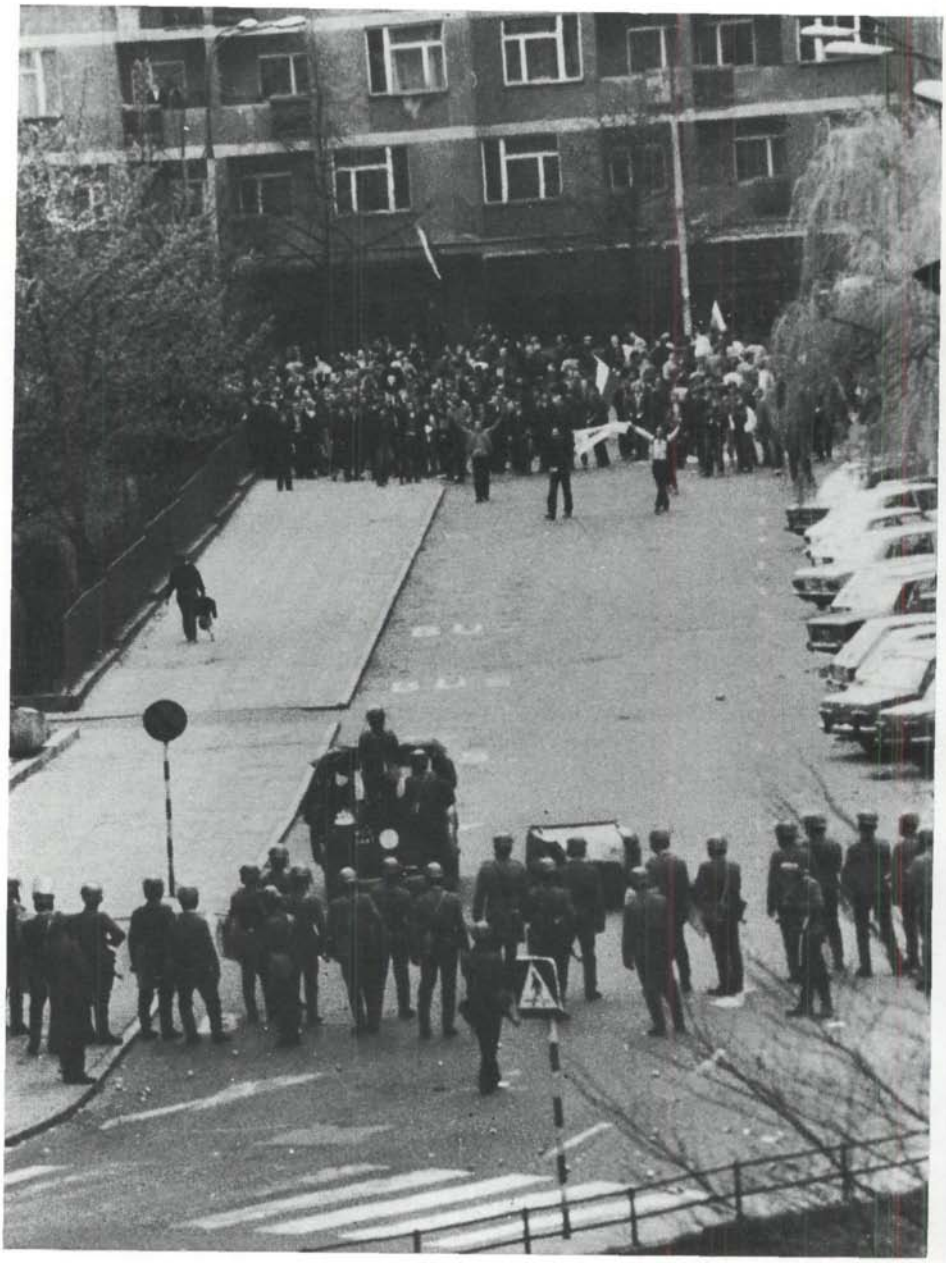

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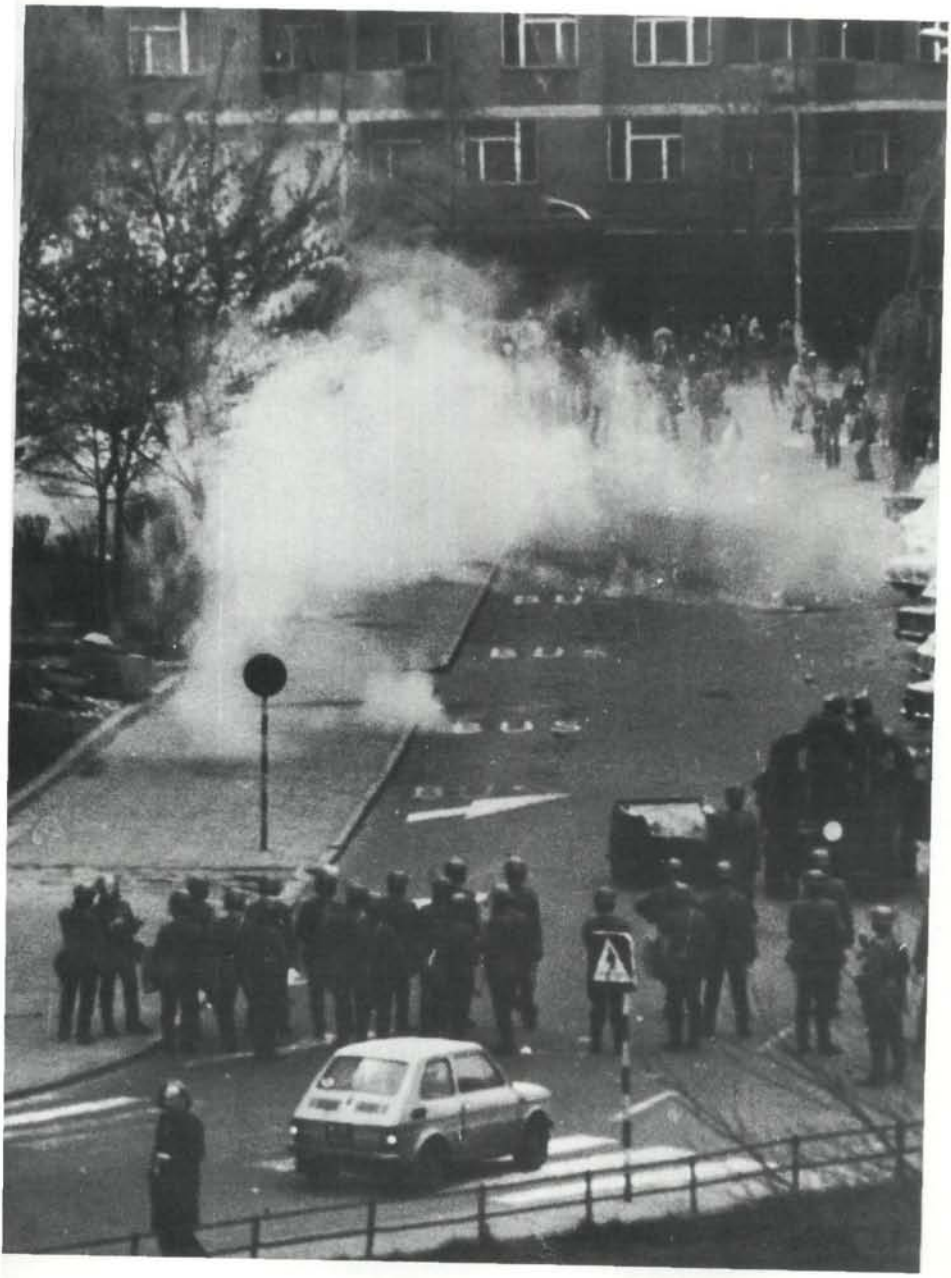

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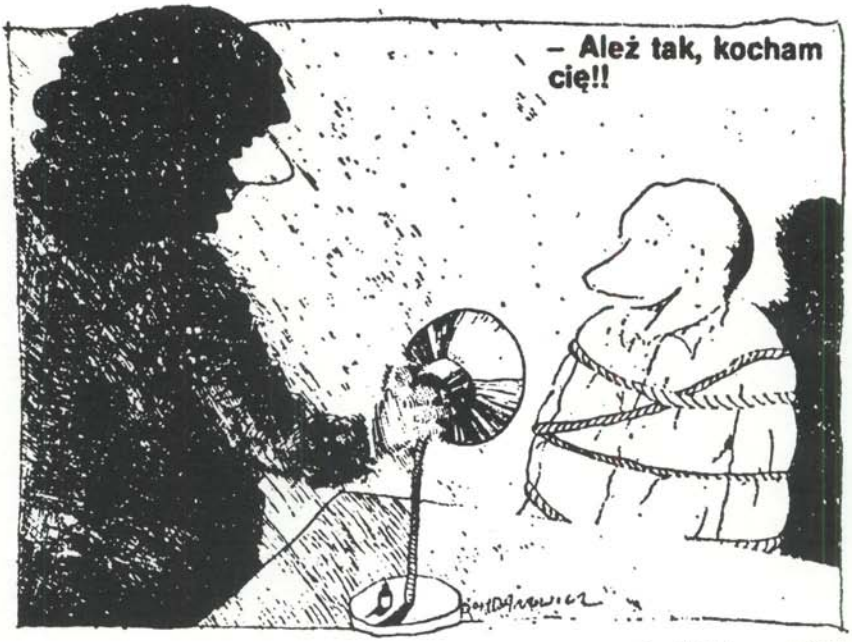
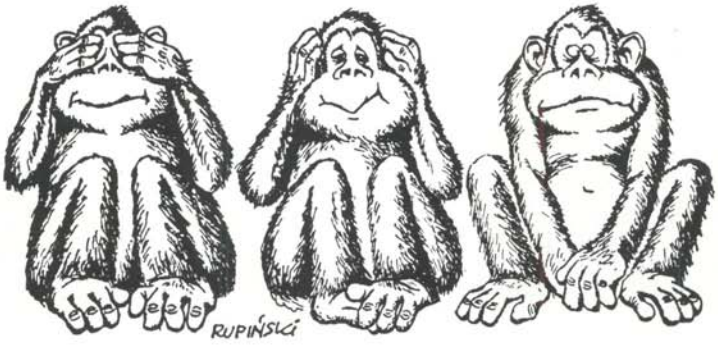


Szpilki (Warsaw) 1977.

" Yes, yes, I love you very much."



Polityka (Warsaw), 1982.

The censor missed the point . . .

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